Authors' Readings

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

EUGENE FIELD

BILL NYE

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

HAMLIN GARLAND

MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD

WILL CARLETON

M. QUAD

OPIE READ

ILLUSTRATED THROUGHOUT

BY

Mary B. Winans,
224, Main St. E.
Lansing, Mich.

AUTHORS' READINGS

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Compiled and illustrated throughout with pen and ink drawings

BY

ARTHUR YOUNG

RECITATIONS FROM THEIR OWN WORKS

BY

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY
MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD
ELLA WHEELER WILCOX
HAMLIN GARLAND
BILL NYE
EUGENE FIELD
WILL CARLETON
M QUAD
AND OPIE READ

With a biography of each author

Fourth Edition

NEW YORK
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PUBLISHERS

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ILLUSTRATOR'S NOTE.

To the person now holding this book:

The sketches in this volume showing characteristic attitudes of the authors represented are the illustrator's individual impressions from life. They were made by him from pencil sketches drawn while observing the authors read or recite, or from his recollection of the various poses assumed. Some of the original sketches in lead pencil were made at public readings. Others were made in private.

With sixteen well-known American writers this plan has been pursued. They are the

following :—General Lew Wallace, James Whitcomb Riley, Captain Charles King, Joaquin Miller, Octave Thanet, C. B. Lewis, ("M. Quad"), Edgar Wilson Nye, Eugene Field, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, John Vance Cheney, Lillian Bell, Mary Hartwell Catherwood, Opie Read, Will Carleton, Hamlin Garland and Robert Burdette.

In addition to the many characteristic poses, a large portrait sketch from life, signed by each author, was made. When the question of putting these pictorial observations into book form arose it was found that there was ample material for two books. Under these circumstances those authors were chosen for the present work whose attitudes were entirely completed and whose literary work had already been selected and illustrated.

The nine authors represented in this book have not ever appeared together in one entertainment prior to the one which is now offered to the reader by this volume itself.

Moreover, some of them have never (before) appeared in public readings, while

others were associated together on the platform for many years.

The late Eugene Field and Edgar Wilson Nye gave the illustrator much encouragement and left him greatly indebted to them.

Toward the other authors he feels under great obligation for much courtesy, while to the various publishers controlling the works of the different authors, grateful acknowledgment is made. Full credit is given in each case in the biographical part of this work.

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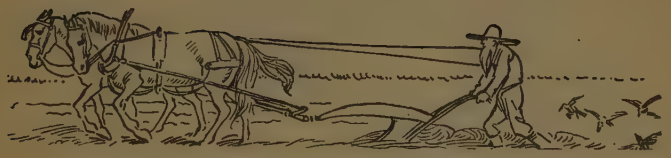
JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY



"You can hear the blackbirds jawin' as they foller up the plow—
Oh, theyr bound to git theyr brekfast, and theyr not a-carin' how."

James Whitcomb Riley reciting "Thoughts fer the Discuraged Farmer."

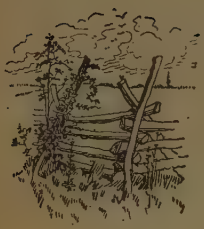
THOUGHTS FER THE DISCURAGED FARMER

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

"The summer wind is sniffin'.."

THE summer wind is sniffin' 'round the bloomin' locus' trees;
And the clover in the pastur' is a big day fer the bees,
And they been a-swiggin honey, above board and on the sly,
Tel they stutter in theyr buzzin' and stagger as they fly.
The flicker on the fence-rail 'pears to jest spit on his wings
And roll up his feathers, by the sassy way he sings;
And the hoss-fly is a-whettin'-up his forelegs fer biz,
And the off-mare is a-switchin' all of her tale they is.

You can hear the blackbirds jawin' as they foller up the plow—
Oh, theyr bound to git theyr brekfast, and theyr not a-carin' how;
So they quarrel in the furries, and they quarrel on the wing—
But theyr peaceabler in pot-pies than any other thing;
And it's when I git my shot-gun drawed up in stiddy rest,
She's as full of tribbelation as a yeller-jacket's nest;
And a few shots before dinner, when the sun's a-shinin' right,
Seems to kindo-sorto sharpen up a feller's appetite!



They's been a heap o' rain, but the sun's out to-day,
And the clouds of the wet spell is all cleared away,
And the woods is all the greener, and the grass is greener still;
It may rain again to-morry, but I don't think it will.

Some says the crops is ruined, and the
corn's drownded out,
And propha-sy the wheat will be a failure,
without doubt;
But the kind Providence that has never
failed us yet,
Will be on hands onc't more at the 'leventh
hour, I bet!

"Er hang his head in silunce."

Does the medder-lark complane, as he swims
high and dry
Through the waves of the wind and the blue
of the sky?
Does the quail set up and whissel in a dissa-
pinted way,
Er hang his head in silunce, and sorrow all
the day?
Is the chipmunck's health a-failin'? Doe
he walk er does he run?
Don't the buzzards ooze around up thare
jest like they've allus done?
Is they anything the matter with the roost-
er's lungs er voice—
Ort a mortal be complainin' when dumb
animals rejoice?

Then, let us, one and all, be contented with
our lot;
The June is here this morning, and the sun
is shining hot.
Oh! let us fill our hearts up with the glory
of the day,
And banish ev'ry doubt and care and sorrow
fur away!
Whatever be our station, with Providence
fer guide,
Sich fine circumstances ort to make us satis-
fied;
Fer the world is full of roses, and the roses
full of dew,
And the dew is full of heavenly love that
drips fer me and you.

"We cross the pasture, and through the wood."

"Then, let us, one and all, be contented with our lot."

OLD AUNT MARY'S

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

Wasn't it pleasant, O brother mine,
In those old days of the lost sunshine
Of youth—when the Saturday's chores were through,
And the "Sunday's wood" in the kitchen, too,
And we went visiting, "me and you,"
Out to Old Aunt Mary's?

"Me and you."

It all comes back so clear to-day!
Though I am as bald as you are gray—
Out by the barn-lot, and down the lane,
We patter along in the dust again,
As light as the tips of the drops of the rain,
Out to Old Aunt Mary's.

We cross the pasture, and through the wood
Where the old gray snag of the poplar stood,

Where the hammering "red-heads" hopped
awry,
And the buzzard "raised" in the "clear-
ing" sky,
And lolled and circled, as we went by
Out to Old Aunt Mary's.

And then in the dust of the road again;
And the teams we met, and the countrymen;
And the long highway, with sunshine spread
As thick as butter on country bread,
Our cares behind, and our hearts ahead
Out to Old Aunt Mary's.

Why, I see her now in the open door,
Where the little gourds grew up the sides,
and o'er
The clapboard roof!—And her face—ah,
me!
Wasn't it good for a boy to see—
And wasn't it good for a boy to be
Out to Old Aunt Mary's.

And O my brother, so far away,
This is to tell you she waits to-day

To welcome us—Aunt Mary fell
Asleep this morning, whispering, "Tell
The boys to come!" And all is well
Out to Old Aunt Mary's.

A LIFE-LESSON

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

THERE! little girl; don't cry!
They have broken your doll, I know;
And your tea-set blue,
And your play-house, too,
Are things of the long ago;
But childish troubles will soon pass by;
There! little girl; don't cry!

There! little girl; don't cry!
They have broken your slate, I know;
And the glad, wild ways
Of your school-girl days
Are things of the long ago;
But life and love will soon come by.
There! little girl; don't cry!

There! little girl; don't cry!
They have broken your heart, I know;
And the rainbow gleams
Of your youthful dreams

Are things of the long ago;
But heaven holds all for which you sigh.
There! little girl; don't cry!

HAMLIN GARLAND

"The tired ponies slept in the shade of the lombardies."

I will read "Uncle Ethan Ripley," the story of a kindly old farmer who was imposed upon by a patent medicine man.

UNCLE ETHAN RIPLEY

BY HAMLIN GARLAND

"Jump in—"

UNCLE ETHAN had a theory that a man's character could be told by the way he sat in a wagon-seat.

"A mean man sets right plumb in the *middle* o' the seat, as much as to say, 'Walk, gol darn yeh, who cares?' But a man that sets in one corner o' the seat, much as to say, 'Jump in—cheaper t' ride 'n to walk,' you can jest tie to."

Uncle Ripley was prejudiced in favor of the stranger, therefore, before he came opposite the potato patch, where the old man was "bugging his vines." The stranger drove a jaded-looking pair of calico ponies, hitched to a clattering democrat wagon, and he sat on the extreme end of the seat, with the lines in his right hand, while his left rested on his thigh, with his little finger

gracefully crooked and his elbows akimbo. He wore a blue shirt, with gay-colored armlets just above the elbows, and his vest hung unbuttoned down his lank ribs. It was plain he was well pleased with himself.

As he pulled up and threw one leg over the end of the seat, Uncle Ethan observed that the left spring was much more worn than the other, which proved that it was not accidental, but that it was the driver's habit to sit on that end of the seat.

"Good-afternoon," said the stranger, pleasantly.

"Good-afternoon, sir."

"Bugs purty plenty?"

"Plenty enough, I gol! I don't see where they all come fum."

"Early Rose?" inquired the man, as if referring to the bugs.

"No; Peachblows an' Carter Reds. My Early Rose is over near the house. The old woman wants 'em near. See the darned things!" he pursued, rapping savagely on the edge of the pan to rattle the bugs back.

"How do yeh kill 'em—scald 'em?"

"Mostly. Sometimes I——"

"Good piece of oats," yawned the stranger, listlessly.

"That's barley."

"So 'tis. Didn't notice."

Uncle Ethan was wondering what the man was. He had some pots of black paint in the wagon, and two or three square boxes.

"What do yeh think o' Cleveland's chances for a third term?" continued the man, as if they had been talking politics all the while.

Uncle Ripley scratched his head. "Waal—I dunno—bein' a Republican—I think——"

"That's so—it's a purty scaly outlook—I don't believe in third terms myself," the man hastened to say.

"Is that your new barn acrost there?" pointing with his whip.

"Yes, sir, it is," replied the old man, proudly. After years of planning and hard work he had managed to erect a little wooden barn, costing possibly three hundred dollars. It was plain to be seen he took a childish pride in the fact of its newness.

"Is that your new barn—"

The stranger mused. "A lovely place for a sign," he said, as his eyes wandered across its shining yellow broadside.

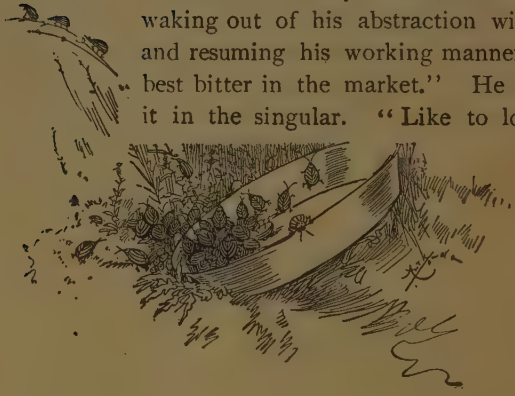
Uncle Ethan stared, unmindful of the bugs crawling over the edge of his pan. His interest in the pots of paint deepened.

"Couldn't think o' lettin' me paint a sign on that barn?" the stranger continued, putting his locked hands around one knee, and gazing away across the pig-pen at the building.

"What kind of a sign? Gol darn your skins!" Uncle Ethan pounded the pan with his paddle and scraped two or three crawling abominations off his leathery wrist.

It was a beautiful day, and the man in the wagon seemed unusually loath to attend to business. The tired ponies slept in the shade of the lombardies. The plain was draped in a warm mist, and shadowed by vast, vaguely defined masses of clouds—a lazy June day.

"Dodd's Family Bitters," said the man, waking out of his abstraction with a start, and resuming his working manner. "The best bitter in the market." He alluded to it in the singular. "Like to look at it?



No trouble to show goods, as the fellah says," he went on hastily, seeing Uncle Ethan's hesitation.

He produced a large bottle of triangular shape, like a bottle for pickled onions. It had a red seal on top, and a strenuous caution in red letters on the neck, "None genuine unless 'Dodd's Family Bitters' is blown in the bottom."

"Here's what it cures," pursued the agent, pointing at the side, where, in an inverted pyramid, the names of several hundred diseases were arranged, running from "gout" to "pulmonary complaints," etc.

"I gol! she cuts a wide swath, don't she?" exclaimed Uncle Ethan, profoundly impressed with the list.

"They ain't no better bitter in the world," said the agent, with a conclusive inflection.

"What's its speshy-*a*ity? Most of 'em have some speshy-*a*lity."

"Well—summer complaints—an'—an'—spring an' fall troubles—tones ye up, sort of."

Uncle Ethan's forgotten pan was empty of his gathered bugs. He was deeply inter-

"What's its speshy-ality?"

ested in this man. There was something he liked about him.

"What does it sell fur?" he asked, after a pause.

"Same price as them cheap medicines—dollar a bottle—big bottles, too. Want one?"

"Wal, mother ain't to home, an' I don't know as she'd like this kind. We ain't been sick f'r years. Still, they's no tellin'," he added, seeing the answer to his objection in the agent's eyes. "Times is purty close, too, with us, y' see; we've jest built that stable——"

"Say, I'll tell yeh what I'll do," said the stranger, waking up and speaking in a warmly generous tone. "I'll give you ten bottles of the bitter if you'll let me paint a sign on that barn. It won't hurt the barn a bit, and if you want 'o, you can paint it out a year from date. Come, what d' ye say?"

"I guess I hadn't better."

The agent thought that Uncle Ethan was after more pay, but in reality he was thinking of what his little old wife would say.

"It simply puts a family bitter in your home that may save you fifty dollars this comin' fall. You can't tell."

Just what the man said after that Uncle Ethan didn't follow. His voice had a confidential purring sound as he stretched across the wagon-seat and talked on, eyes half shut. He straightened up at last, and concluded, in the tone of one who has carried his point:

"So! If you didn't want to use the whole twenty-five bottles y'rself, why! sell it to your neighbors. You can get twenty dollars out of it easy, and still have five bottles of the best family bitter that ever went into a bottle."

It was the thought of this opportunity to get a buffalo-skin coat that consoled Uncle Ethan as he saw the hideous black letters appearing under the agent's lazy brush.

It was the hot side of the barn, and painting was no light work. The agent was forced to mop his forehead with his sleeve.

"Say, hain't got a cooky or anything, and a cup o' milk handy?" he said at the end of the first enormous word, which ran the whole length of the barn.

"It simply puts—"

Uncle Ethan got him the milk and cooky, which he ate with an exaggeratedly dainty action of his fingers, seated meanwhile on the staging which Uncle Ripley had helped him to build. This lunch infused new energy into him, and in a short time "DODD'S FAMILY BITTERS, Best in the Market," disfigured the sweet-smelling pine-boards.

Ethan was eating his self-obtained supper of bread and milk when his wife came home.

"Who's been a-paintin' on that barn?" she demanded, her bead-like eyes flashing, her withered little face set in an ominous frown. Ethan Ripley, what you been doin'?"

"Nawthin'," he replied, feebly.

"Who painted that sign on there?"

"A man come along an' he wanted to paint that on there, and I let 'im; and it's my barn, anyway. I guess I can do what I'm a min' to with it," he ended, defiantly; but his eyes wavered.

Mrs. Ripley ignored the defiance. "What under the sun p'sessed you to do such a thing as that, Ethan Ripley? I declare I

don't see! You git fooler an' fooler ev'ry day you live, I *do* believe."

Uncle Ethan attempted a defence.

"Well, he paid me twenty-five dollars f'r it, anyway."

"Did 'e?" She was visibly affected by this news.

"Well, anyhow, it amounts to that; he give me twenty-five bottles——"

Mrs. Ripley sank back in her chair. "Well, I swan to Bungay! Ethan Ripley—wal, you beat all I *ever* see!" she added in despair of expression. "I thought you had *some* sense left, but you hain't, not one blessed scimpton. Where *is* the stuff?"

"Down cellar, an' you needn't take on no airs, ol' woman. I've known you to buy things you didn't need time an' time 'n' agin, tins and things, an' I guess you wish you had back that ten dollars you paid for that illustrated Bible."

"Go 'long an' bring that stuff up here. I never see such a man in my life. It's a wonder he didn't do it f'r two bottles." She glared out at the sign, which faced directly upon the kitchen window.

"I do believe."

Uncle Ethan tugged the two cases up and set them down on the floor of the kitchen. Mrs. Ripley opened a bottle and smelled of it like a cautious cat.

"Ugh! Merciful sakes, what stuff! It ain't fit f'r a hog to take. What'd you think you was goin' to do with it?" she asked, in poignant disgust.

"I expected to take it—if I was sick. Whaddy ye s'pose?" He defiantly stood his ground, towering above her like a leaning tower.

"The hull cartload of it?"

"No. I'm goin' to sell part of it an' git me an overcoat——"

"Sell it!" she shouted. "Nobuddy'll buy that sick'nin' stuff but an old numbskull like you. Take that slop out o' the house this minute! Take it right down to the sink-hole an' smash every bottle on the stones."

Uncle Ethan and the cases of medicine disappeared, and the old woman addressed her concluding remarks to little Tewksbury, her grandson, who stood timidly on one leg in the doorway, like an intruding pullet.

"Everything around this place 'ud go to rack an' ruin if I didn't keep a watch on that soft-pated old dummy. I thought that lightenin'-rod man had give him a lesson he'd remember, but no, he must go an' make a reg'lar——"

She subsided in a tumult of banging pans, which helped her out in the matter of expression and reduced her to a grim sort of quiet. Uncle Ethan went about the house like a convict on shipboard. Once she caught him looking out of the window.

"I should *think* you'd feel proud o' that."

Uncle Ethan had never been sick a day in his life. He was bent and bruised with never-ending toil, but he had nothing especial the matter with him.

He did not smash the medicine, as Mrs. Ripley commanded, because he had determined to sell it. The next Sunday morning, after his chores were done, he put on his best coat of faded diagonal, and was brushing his hair into a ridge across the centre of his high, narrow head, when Mrs. Ripley came in from feeding the calves.

"Where you goin' now?"

"Where you goin' now?"

"None o' your business," he replied. "It's darn funny if I can't stir without you wantin' to know all about it. Where's Tewky?"

"Feedin' the chickens. You ain't goin' to take him off this mornin' now! I don't care where you go."

"Who's a-goin' to take him off? I ain't said nothin' about takin' him off."

"Wal, take y'rself off, an' if y' ain't here f'r dinner, I ain't goin' to get no supper."

Ripley took a water-pail and put four bottles of "the bitter" into it, and trudged away up the road with it in a pleasant glow of hope. All nature seemed to declare the day a time of rest, and invited men to disassociate ideas of toil from the rustling green wheat, shining grass, and tossing blooms. Something of the sweetness and buoyancy of all nature permeated the old man's work-calloused body, and he whistled little snatches of the dance tunes he played on his fiddle.

But he found neighbor Johnson to be supplied with another variety of bitter, which

"He trudged away up the road in a pleasant glow of hope."

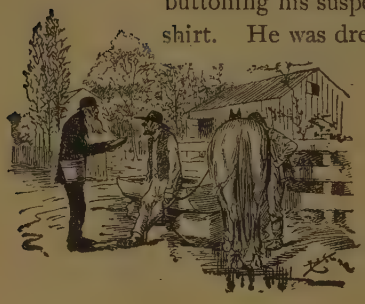
was all he needed for the present. He qualified his refusal to buy with a cordial invitation to go out and see his shotes, in which he took infinite pride. But Uncle Ripley said: "I guess I'll haf t' be goin'; I want 'o git up to Jennings' before dinner."

He couldn't help feeling a little depressed when he found Jennings away. The next house along the pleasant lane was inhabited by a "new-comer." He was sitting on the horse-trough, holding a horse's halter, while his hired man dashed cold water upon the galled spot on the animal's shoulder.

After some preliminary talk Ripley presented his medicine.

"Hell, no! What do I want of such stuff? When they's anything the matter with me, I take a lunkin' ol' swig of popple-bark and bourbon? That fixes me."

Uncle Ethan moved off up the lane. He hardly felt like whistling now. At the next house he set his pail down in the weeds beside the fence, and went in without it. Doudney came to the door in his bare feet, buttoning his suspenders over a clean boiled shirt. He was dressing to go out.



"Hello, Ripley. I was just goin' down your way. Jest wait a minute an' I'll be out."

When he came out fully dressed Uncle Ethan grappled him.

"Say, what d' you think o' paytent med——"

"Some of 'em are boss. But y' want 'o know what y're gitt'n."

"What d' ye think o' Dodd's——"

"Best in the market."

Uncle Ethan straightened up and his face lighted. Doudney went on:

"Yes, sir; best bitter that ever went into a bottle. I know, I've tried it. I don't go much on patent medicines, but when I get a good——"

"Don't want 'o buy a bottle?"

Doudney turned and faced him.

"Buy! No. I've got nineteen bottles I want 'o *sell.*" Ripley glanced up at Doudney's new granary and there read "Dodd's Family Bitters." He was stricken dumb. Doudney saw it all and roared.

"Wal, that's a good one! We two tryin' to sell each other bitters. Ho—ho—ho

"What d' ye think o' Dodd's——"

—har, whoop! wal, this is rich! How many bottles did you git?"

"None o' your business," said Uncle Ethan, as he turned and made off, while Doudney screamed with merriment.

On his way home Uncle Ethan grew ashamed of his burden. Doudney had canvassed the whole neighborhood, and he practically gave up the struggle. Everybody he met seemed determined to find out what he had been doing, and at last he began lying about it.

"Hello, Uncle Ripley, what y' got there in that pail?"

"Goose eggs f'r settin'."

He disposed of one bottle to old Gus Peterson. Gus never paid his debts, and he would only promise fifty cents "on tick" for the bottle, and yet so desperate was Ripley that this *quasi* sale cheered him up not a little.

As he came down the road, tired, dusty and hungry, he climbed over the fence in order to avoid seeing that sign on the barn, and slunk into the house without looking back.

He couldn't have felt meaner about it if he had allowed a Democratic poster to be pasted there.

The evening passed in grim silence, and in sleep he saw that sign wriggling across the side of the barn like boa-constrictors hung on rails. He tried to paint them out, but every time he tried it the man seemed to come back with a sheriff, and savagely warned him to let it stay till the year was up. In some mysterious way the agent seemed to know every time he brought out the paint-pot, and he was no longer the pleasant-voiced individual who drove the calico ponies.

"Lovely, ain't it!"

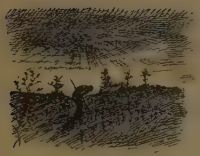
As he stepped out into the yard next morning, that abominable, sickening, scrawling advertisement was the first thing that claimed his glance—it blotted out the beauty of the morning.

Mrs. Ripley came to the window, buttoning her dress at the throat, a wisp of her hair sticking assertively from the little knob at the back of her head.

"Lovely, ain't it! An' *I've* got to see it all day long. I can't look out the winder

but that thing's right in my face." It seemed to make her savage. She hadn't been in such a temper since her visit to New York. "I hope you feel satisfied with it."

Ripley walked off to the barn. His pride in its clean, sweet newness was gone. He slyly tried the paint to see if it couldn't be scraped off, but it was dried in thoroughly. Whereas before he had taken delight in having his neighbors turn and look at the building, now he kept out of sight whenever he saw a team coming. He hoed corn away in the back of the field, when he should have been bugging potatoes by the roadside.



Mrs. Ripley was in a frightful mood about it, but she held herself in check for several days. At last she burst forth:

"Ethan Ripley, I can't stand that thing any longer, and I ain't goin' to, that's all! You've got to go and paint that thing out, or I will. I'm just about crazy with it."

"But, mother, I promised——"

"I don't care *what* you promised, it's got to be painted out. I've got the nightmare now, seein' it. I'm goin' to send f'r a pail o' red paint, and I'm goin' to paint that

out if it takes the last breath I've got to do it."

"I'll tend to it, mother, if you won't hurry me——"

"I can't stand it another day. It makes me boil every time I look out the winder."

Uncle Ethan hitched up his team and drove gloomily off to town, where he tried to find the agent. He lived in some other part of the country, however, and so the old man gave up and bought a pot of red paint, not daring to go back to his desperate wife without it.

"Drove gloomily off."

"Goin' to paint y'r new barn?" inquired the merchant, with friendly interest.

Uncle Ethan turned with guilty sharpness; but the merchant's face was grave and kindly.

"Yes, I thought I'd touch it up a little—don't cost much."

"It pays—always," the merchant said, emphatically.

"Will it—stick jest as well put on evenings?" inquired Uncle Ethan, hesitatingly.

"Yes—won't make any difference. Why? Ain't goin' to have——"

"Wal—I kind o' thought I'd do it odd times night an' mornin'—kind o' odd times——"

He seemed oddly confused about it, and the merchant looked after him anxiously as he drove away.

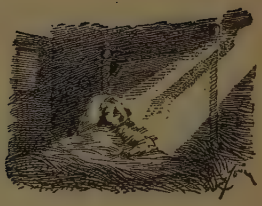
After supper that night he went out to the barn, and Mrs. Ripley heard him sawing and hammering. Then the noise ceased, and he came in and sat down in his usual place.

"What y' ben makin'?" she inquired. Tewksbury had gone to bed. She sat darning a stocking.

"I jest thought I'd git the stagin' ready f'r paintin," he said, evasively.

"Wal! I'll be glad when it's covered up." When she got ready for bed, he was still seated in his chair, and after she had dozed off two or three times she began to wonder why he didn't come. When the clock struck ten, and she realized that he had not stirred, she began to get impatient. "Come, are y' goin' to sit there all night?"

"A lazy June day."



There was no reply. She rose up in bed and looked about the room. The broad moon flooded it with light, so that she could see he was not asleep in his chair, as she had supposed. There was something ominous in his disappearance.

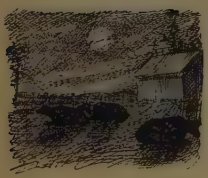
"Ethan! Ethan Ripley, where are yeh?" There was no reply to her sharp call. She rose and distractedly looked about among the furniture, as if he might somehow be a cat and be hiding in a corner somewhere. Then she went upstairs where the boy slept, her hard little heels making a curious *tunking* noise on the bare boards. The moon fell across the sleeping boy like a robe of silver. He was alone.

"Looked about."

She began to be alarmed. Her eyes widened in fear. All sorts of vague horrors sprang unbidden into her brain. She still had the mist of sleep in her brain.

She hurried down the stairs and out into the fragrant night. The katydids were singing in infinite peace under the solemn splendor of the moon. The cattle sniffed and sighed, jangling their bells now and then, and the chickens in the coops stirred un-

easily as if overheated. The old woman stood there in her bare feet and long night-gown, horror-stricken. The ghastly story of a man who had hung himself in his barn because his wife deserted him came into her mind and stayed there with frightful persistency. Her throat filled chokingly.



She felt a wild rush of loneliness. She had a sudden realization of how dear that gaunt old figure was, with its grizzled face and ready smile. Her breath came quick and quicker, and she was at the point of bursting into a wild cry to Tewksbury, when she heard a strange noise. It came from the barn, a creaking noise. She looked that way, and saw in the shadowed side a deeper shadow moving to and fro. A revulsion to astonishment and anger took place in her.

"Land o' Bungay! If he ain't paintin' that barn, like a perfect old idiot, in the night."

Uncle Ethan, working desperately, did not hear her feet pattering down the path, and was startled by her shrill voice.

"Well, Ethan Ripley, whaddy y' think you're doin' now?"

He made two or three slapping passes with the brush, and then snapped, "I'm a-paintin' this barn—whaddy ye s'pose? If ye had eyes y' wouldn't ask."

"Well, you come right straight to bed. What d' you mean by actin' so?"

"You go back into the house an' let me be. I know what I'm a-doin'. You've pestered me about this sign jest about enough." He dabbed his brush to and fro as he spoke. His gaunt figure towered above her in shadow. His slapping brush had a vicious sound.

Neither spoke for some time. At length she said, more gently, "Ain't you comin' in?"

"No—not till I get a-ready. You go 'long an' tend to y'r own business. Don't stan' there an' ketch cold."

She moved off slowly toward the house. His voice subdued her. Working alone out there had rendered him savage; he was not to be pushed any farther. She knew by the tone of his voice that he must not be assaulted. She slipped on her shoes and a shawl, and came back where

"Don't stan' there."

he was working, and took a seat on a saw-horse.

"I'm a-goin' to set right here till you come in, Ethan Ripley," she said, in a firm voice, but gentler than usual.

"Waal, you'll set a good while," was his ungracious reply. But each felt a furtive tenderness for the other. He worked on in silence. The boards creaked heavily as he walked to and fro, and the slapping sound of the paint-brush sounded loud in the sweet harmony of the night. The majestic moon swung slowly round the corner of the barn, and fell upon the old man's grizzled head and bent shoulders. The horses inside could be heard stamping the mosquitoes away, and chewing their hay in pleasant chorus.

"The majestic moon swung."

The little figure seated on the saw-horse drew the shawl closer about her thin shoulders. Her eyes were in shadow, and her hands were wrapped in her shawl. At last she spoke in a curious tone.

"Waal I don't know as you *was* so very much to blame. I *didn't* want that Bible myself—I held out I did, but I didn't."

Ethan worked on until the full meaning

of this unprecedented surrender penetrated his head, and then he threw down his brush.

"Wal, I guess I'll let 'er go at that. I've covered up the most of it, anyhow. Guess we'd better go in."

"Wal, I guess I'll let 'er go at that."

EUGENE FIELD

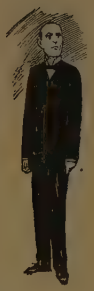
"And as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—"

I will recite three poems, "Long Ago," "Little Boy Blue," and "Seein' Things," the latter was suggested by a talk with a little boy friend of mine after hearing him scream out in his sleep.

LONG AGO

BY EUGENE FIELD

I ONCE knew all the birds that came
  And nested in our orchard trees;
For every flower I had a name;
  My friends were woodchucks, toads, and bees;
I knew where thrived in yonder glen
  What plants would soothe a stone-bruised toe—
Oh, I was very learnéd then;
  But that was very long ago!



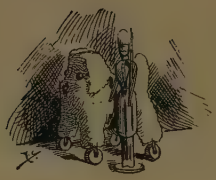
"Oh, I was very learnéd then."

I knew the spot upon the hill
  Where checkerberries could be found;
I knew the rushes near the mill
  Where pickerel lay that weighed a pound!
I knew the wood—the very tree—
  Where lived the poaching, saucy crow;
All the woods and crows knew me—
  But that was very long ago!

"I'd wish to be a boy again."

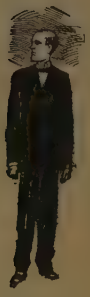
And pining for the joys of youth,
I tread the old familiar spot
Only to learn this solemn truth:
I have forgotten, am forgot.
Yet here's this youngster at my knee
Knows all the things I used to know.
To think I once was wise as he—
But that was very long ago!
I know it's folly to complain
Of whatsoe'er the Fates decree;
Yet were not wishes all in vain,
I tell you what my wish should be:
I'd wish to be a boy again,
Back with the friends I used to know;
For I was, oh! so happy then—
But that was very long ago!

"I knew the wood—the very tree—
Where lived the poaching, saucy crow."



LITTLE BOY BLUE

BY EUGENE FIELD



"But sturdy and stanch he stands."

THE little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch he stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket moulds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new
And the soldier was passing fair,
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now, don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise!"
So toddling off to his trundle-bed
He dreamt of the pretty toys.
And as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh, the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true.

Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face.
And they wonder, as waiting these long years through,
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue
Since he kissed them and put them there.

"What has become of our Little Boy Blue."

SEEIN' THINGS

BY EUGENE FIELD

I AIN'T afeard uv snakes, or toads, or bugs,
or worms, or mice,
An' things 'at girls are skeered uv I think
are awful nice!
I'm pretty brave, I guess; an' yet I hate to
go to bed,
For, when I'm tucked up warm an' snug an'
when my prayers are said,
Mother tells me "Happy dreams!" and
takes away the light,
An' leaves me lyin' all alone an' seein'
things at night!
Sometimes they're in the corner, sometimes
they're by the door,
Sometimes they're all a-standin' in the mid-
dle uv the floor;
Sometimes they are a-sittin' down, some-
times they're walkin' round

"I'm pretty brave, I guess."

So softly and so creepy-like they never make
a sound!
Sometimes they are as black as ink, an' other
times they're white—
But the color ain't no difference when you
see things at night!

"P'intin' at me—so!"

Once, when I licked a feller 'at had just
moved on our street,
An' father sent me up to bed without a bite
to eat,
I woke up in the dark an' saw things stand-
in' in a row,
A-lookin' at me cross-eyed an' p'intin' at
me—so!
Oh, my! I wuz so skeered that time I never
slep' a mite—
It's almost alluz when I'm bad I see things
at night!

Lucky thing I ain't a girl, or I'd be skeered
to death!
Bein' I'm a boy, I duck my head an' hold
my breath;
An' I am, oh! so sorry I'm a naughty boy,
an' then

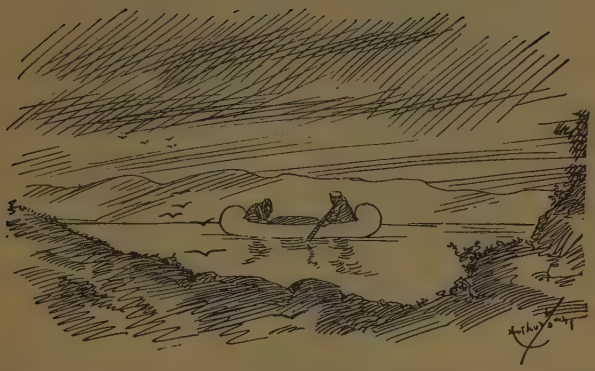
"*I woke up in the dark an' saw things standin' in a row.*"

I promise to be better an' I say my prayers again!
Gran'ma tells me that's the only way to make it right
When a feller has been wicked an' sees things at night.

An' so, when other naughty boys would coax me into sin,
I try to skwush the Tempter's voice 'at urges me within;
An' when they's pie for supper, or cakes 'at's big an' nice,
I want to—but I do not pass my plate f'r them things twice!
No, ruther let Starvation wipe me slowly out o' sight
Than I should keep a-livin' on an' seein' things at night!

"I try to skwush the Tempter's voice."

MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD



"Three times they pulled up-stream and floated down past the friars."

I will read the last chapter of the story "The Little Renault." It will be necessary for the reader to go with me back to the year 1682, when La Salle and his followers were exploring the valley of the Illinois.

THE LITTLE RENAULT

BY MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD

"While the autumn afternoon dimmed and faded."

THE canoe was so leaky that it had to be pulled ashore when Tonty's party had rowed up-stream about twenty-five miles. They camped early in the afternoon. The two priests built a fire, while Boisrondet and L'Espérance cut branches, and with these and blankets made a couple of knotty mattresses, on which Tonty and the little Renault could rest with their feet toward the blaze. Tonty's wound was again bleeding. After efforts to mend the boat he dropped upon his pallet in deadly sickness, and lay there while the autumn afternoon dimmed and faded out as if the smile of God were being withdrawn from the world.

Father Ribourde and Father Membré, tended both patients with all their monastic skill. The little Renault was full of delirious

"As night came on."

laughter. L'Espérance, while he labored on the boat with such calking as the woods afforded, groaned over the lad's state and reproached himself for ever grudging the child service. Boisrondet worked at dragging fuel as if his one desire was to exhaust himself and die. As night came on he piled a fire of huge size, though it was a dangerous beacon, for they were camped on a flat and wooded strip some distance from sheltering bluffs, and their light perhaps drew other prowlers than the Iroquois. During the night there were stirrings in thickets, and once a soft dip or two in the river, as if a canoe paddle had incautiously lapsed to its usual motion.

After a meagre supper Father Membré and L'Espérance lay down to sleep while Father Ribourde and Boisrondet kept guard. The weather was changing, and a chill wind swept along the river valley. It continually scattered the little Renault's curls over her fever-swollen face, and Boisrondet, unable to endure this, built up a screen of brush. He sat on the ground beside her pallet, and Father Ribourde sat at the other side,

though the priest rose at intervals and examined Tonty.

The whole pile of burning logs was heaped between the little Renault and Tonty. He lay opposite her, with his feet, also, to the fire, sleeping as only exhausted frontiersmen can sleep. Nothing in woods or stooping clouds, or in the outcry of spirits around him, reached his consciousness all that night. He was suspended from the world in a swoon of sleep. His swarthiness was so blanched by loss of blood that his black hair and mustache startled the eye. Father Ribourde listened for his breath, into such deep recesses had his physical life made its retreat.

But the girl on the opposite side of the fire brought echoes from the darkness. She sang. She thought she was dancing in a whirl along peaks, or fishing in the river with L'Espérance, or shooting arrows at a mark with young Indians, or moving across the prairie with Tonty on his errand to the Iroquois. Through every act ran gladness. She exulted upward through the fire-gilt branches.

"She exulted upward."

"O Mother of God, what joy thou hast

given me! If there had been no Monsieur de Tonty—think of that! Then I should have crouched like fields blackened in frost. Then I should not know what life is. How desolate—to be without Monsieur de Tonty! The savages and the wretches at Crèvecœur, they are all like grasshoppers beside him. I would rather have him call me his little lad than be Queen of France."

"—think of that!"

The priest's soothing had no effect on her fever-driven imagination. She drank when he held a cup to her mouth, and stared at him, still laughing. But during several hours there was scarcely a pause in her talk of Tonty.

Boisrondet sat behind her back—for she lay upon her sound shoulder—and endured all this. The flower of martyrdom and the flower of love bloomed there before the priest in the dank woods beside the collapsing camp-fire. The lonesome, low wail of wind was contradicted by the little Renault's glad monotone. All the innocent thoughts which a girl pours out to her mother this motherless girl poured out to Tonty. It was a confession more sacred than any made

to a priest. Boisrondet put his hands upon his ears.

Ruddy embers shone on Father Membré and L'Espérance, Récollet's capote, and servant's shaggy dress rising and falling in unison throughout the night; for the watchers did not wake them at all.

When Father Ribourde rose up again to look at Tonty, Boisrondet crept to his place and sat by the delirious girl's head. The priest said nothing, and accepted the change. It became his care to keep the little Renault from jarring her wound with her groping hands.

Boisrondet's eyes may have pierced the floating veil of delirium to her consciousness. The smile of vague happiness which she gave the priest turned to a look of solicitude.

"Forgive the blow."

"Sieur de Boisrondet, did I hurt you?" she cried.

He shook his head.

"Forgive the blow."

"I was grateful for it," muttered Boisrondet.

Still his heart-broken eyes pierced the pa-

" Did I hurt you ? "

vilion of her gladness, and she cried out again :

" Sieur de Boisrondet, did I hurt you ? "

" No, no, no ! "

" Forgive the blow."

" O saints in heaven ! " the man groaned, holding his head in his hands.

" How good is God," said the little Renault, returning to her heights, " who made all His creatures so happy ! My Monsieur de Tonty, *my* Monsieur de Tonty——" So she moved on through the clouds.

Tonty awoke at daybreak and stood up weak and giddy, looking first at the palle on the other side of the sylvan hearth. A stiff small figure was covered there, and Boisrondet was stretched beside it, face downward on the ground.

" The poor little lad ! " groaned Tonty, coming down on one knee and lifting a blanket edge. " When did he die, Boisrondet ? "

Without moving Boisrondet said, from the ground :

" She died not long after midnight."

Her face in its pillow of black curls was a

marble dream of gladness. She had the wonderful beauty of dead children, and Tonty saw her as a dead child rather than as a woman triumphant in flawless happiness, whose uninhabited face smiled on at her wondrous fate. She had seen her hero in his splendor without man-cruelty and pettiness. The world had been a good place to the little Renault.

Father Ribourde had no candles to put at her head and feet, but he knelt, saying prayers for her peace.

The day was chill and sullen, and occasional spatters of sleet glazed twigs and grass tufts. Father Membré and L'Espérance silently took the labors of the camp upon themselves. They dug roots to add to the scant breakfast and brought fuel. Boisrondet made no response to priest or commandant, but lay on the ground without eating until the slate-gray afternoon began to thicken.

"Boisrondet," then said Tonty, stopping, and taking his subaltern by the shoulder, "the Indians left us not a tool, as you know. We cannot hollow out any grave

"Boisrondet made no response."

which would be deep enough to keep the little lad from the wolves."

Boisrondet shivered as if he were beginning to feel the sleet in his hair and on the little Renault's blanket.

"We shall have to sink him in the river, Boisrondet. Be a man."

Boisrondet rose directly, with fierce readiness to do the thing at once if it must be done. He did not look at her again, but sat under a tree with his back turned while preparations were made.

L'Espérance brought many stones, and the priests ballasted and wound the body in the best blankets the camp afforded, tying the packet well with buffalo thongs. They placed it in the canoe, and Tonty called Boisrondet.

Both Récollets stood on the bank repeating prayers while Tonty and Boisrondet pulled up against the current. The river was a dull monster, but a greedy one, reaching for its prey through the boat's seams.

"Will this do, Boisrondet?" appealed Tonty.

"Will this do?"

"Pull a little farther."

"Pull a little farther, monsieur. I cannot bear it yet."

Tonty with his single-handed stroke continued to help hold their boat against the current.

Three times they pulled up-stream and floated down past the friars.

"Will this do, Boisrondet?" twice repeated Tonty. Twice the answer was:

"Monsieur, I cannot bear it yet."

The commandant avoided gazing at Boisrondet's misery. His fraternal gaze dwelt on the blanket chrysalis of the little Renault. He would have given his remaining hand—which meant his future career—to bring back the boy's life, but even to his large sympathy Boisrondet's passion was like a sealed house. It had been impossible for him to grasp the feminine quality in that lad's black curls and flower-fresh face.

"My poor Boisrondet," he urged, "we must have the courage to lift the little lad and do for him what he would do for us."

"Lad! lad!" burst out the other with scoffing. "Always lad to you—the sweetest woman that ever drew breath!" His

voice broke down, and he distorted his face, sobbing aloud.

Tonty broke down and sobbed with him. They arose with a desperate impulse together, the man she loved and the other man who loved her, lifted their heavy burden, poised, swung, and threw it out upon the water. It smote the river and sank, and their canoe reeled with the splashing and surging of a disturbed current. Tonty staggered and sat down, gripping the sides of the boat, feeling his wound start afresh. Nature's old sigh swept across the wind-harp of tree-tops. The river composed itself and again moved steadily, perhaps rocking the packet in some pebbly hollow, perhaps passing it on toward the Mississippi. And the priests' voices concluded their monotone for the dead.

"Heaven give him sweet rest in this river of the Illinois!" uttered Tonty. But Boisrondet said nothing more.

"A man leaps out of the thicket."

I will read a sketch entitled "The Last of His Race," also a bed-time conversation between two little boys called "The Boys About the House."

THE LAST OF HIS RACE

BY "M. QUAD"

"He was a fugitive."

AN hour before sunset he came out of his hiding-place on the banks of the Little Missouri. Hunger drove him out. He sniffed the air and looked about him like a fugitive. He was a fugitive. His once proud bearing had given place to the demeanor of a skulker. The fire in his eye had died out; he had become thin and weak; he started in alarm as a coyote sneaked out of the bushes above him and gave utterance to a dismal howl. He startled by the voice of such a creature—he, the grand old buffalo bull who had led a herd of thousands in a hundred wild stampedes, who had known no conqueror, who had traversed half a continent unchecked by man or the obstacles of nature!

He lifted his head and looked to the south. From the Canadian line and beyond, down to the very waters of the Rio Grande, the

American bison could once be found in numbers absolutely countless. Their migration made a continent tremble. Their stampedes made mountains rock. A strip of country two thousand miles long by six hundred broad had been their pasture ground. A thousand streams had been made to quench their thirst—a thousand fords created that they might pass in safety.

"And now the end has come!"

And now the end has come! If there was one single living buffalo between him and the waters lapping the far shores of Texas, it was some craven in hiding like himself. From the Laramie plains to the waters of the Elkhorn, from north to south of a continent, the plains, and prairies, and valleys yielded up the monuments of man's cupidity in the shape of bleaching skeletons. They bleached in the sun by day and blackened under the dews of night. At every yard was a skull polished by the teeth of wolf, and bear, and coyote; at every rod a skeleton with bones falling apart and half-hidden in the grass. Even amidst the firs, and cedars, and pines on the hillsides were bones—carried there by the vultures, who

feasted and grew fat and were lethargic with over-feeding. Down in the dark and dismal ravines, where the foot of man had never trod, up canyons where the darkness and silence were like a horrible nightmare, there were skulls, and ribs, and thigh-bones, dragged away by panther, and grizzly, and wildcat.

Scarred by arrows, wounded by bullets, pursued by foes from valley to valley and from river to river, the whilom monarch has at last found a covert and a breathing-spell for a day. He has skulked like a wounded wolf; he has crouched like a fox in his lair. The cry of a vulture hovering high above had made him tremble—he who had driven the dreaded grizzly out of his path more than once, and whose sharp, stout horns had sent more than one Indian pony to his death!

"He has skulked like a wounded wolf."

Ah! But the cries of the coyote have brought company! They come sneaking out of thicket, and grass, and crevice until there are a dozen. The youngest calf of a herd would not fear them, and yet their angry snarls make the old monarch tremble! The sun seems to drop into a lower notch as

"His head is held high."

the old monarch moves softly about to snatch a bite here and there, but always keeping his eye on the pack. As the craving of hunger becomes partly satisfied, the fire comes back to his eyes, and he even gives his head a defiant toss. If their howling brings the savage wolf, he will die fighting —he will die game. He has fought them a hundred battles, and never suffered defeat.

Here they come! He looks up to find himself almost encircled. They are hungry and gaunt. Their eyes blaze and foam falls from their lips as they close in on him. Now, watch him! He is no longer the fugitive—the craven, trembling at every sound. His head is held high; there is a royal fire in his great eyes, and he utters a low bellow of defiance and paws the earth as a challenge for them to come on.

Crack! Crash! Hurrah!

The bull totters, sways to and fro, and falls to the earth, shot through the heart. A man leaps out of the thicket, waves his hat and gun, and cheers the success of his shot, while the wolves sneak away into the twilight and growl and snap at each other.

The last of his race is dead. He would have died fighting as a monarch should, but man prevented. It is the last hide—the last feast for wolves and vultures—the last monument to mark man's savagery when stirred by cupidity and selfishness.

"The last of his race is dead."

THE BOYS AROUND THE HOUSE

BY "M. QUAD"

"They are good boys."

SURELY you must have seen a boy of eight or ten years of age get ready for bed? His shoestrings are in a hard knot, and after a few vain efforts to unlace them he rushes after a case-knife and saws each string in two. One shoe is thrown under the table, the other behind the stove, his jacket behind the door, and his stockings are distributed over as many chairs as they will reach.

The boy doesn't slip his pants off; he struggles out of them, holding a leg down with his foot and drawing his limbs out after many stupendous efforts. While doing this his hands are clutched into the bedclothes, and by the time he is ready to get into bed the quilts and sheets are awry and the bed is full of humps and lumps. His brother has gone through the same motions, and both finally crawl into bed. They are good boys,

"Hain't either, ma!"

and they love each other, but they are hardly settled on their backs when one cries out—

"Hitch along!"

"I won't," bluntly replies the other.

"Ma, Bill's got more'n half the bed!" cries the first.

"Hain't either, ma!" replies Bill.

There is a moment of silence, and then the first exclaims—

"Get yer feet off'n me!"

"They hain't touching you!" is the answer.

"Yes, they be, and you're on my pillow, too!"

"Oh! my stars, what a whopper! You'll never go to heaven!"

The mother looks into the bedroom and kindly says—

"Come, children, be good, and don't make your mother any trouble."

"Well," replies the youngest, "if Bill 'll tell me a bear story I'll go to sleep."

The mother withdraws, and Bill starts out—

"Well, you know, there was an old bear

who lived in a cave. He was a big black bear. He had eyes like coals of fire, you know, and when he looked at a feller he—"

"Ma, Bill's scaring me!" yells Henry, sitting on end.

"Oh, ma! that's the awfullest story you ever heard!" replies Bill.

"Hitch along, I say!" exclaims Henry.

"I am along!" replies Bill.

"Get yer knee out'n my back!"

"Hain't anywhere near ye!"

"Gimme some cloze!"

"You've got more'n half now!"

"Come, children, do be good and go to sleep," says the mother, entering the room and arranging the clothes.

They doze off after a few muttered words, to preserve the peace until morning, and it is popularly supposed that an angel sits on each bedpost to sentinel either curly head during the long, dark hours.

"An angel sits on each bedpost."

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

"But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain."

I will read the poems "Which Are You?" "Solitude," and "The Beautiful Land of Nod."

WHICH ARE YOU?

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

"The good are half bad."

THERE are two kinds of people on earth today,
Just two kinds of people; no more, I say.
Not the sinner and saint, for it's well understood,
The good are half bad, and the bad are half good.

Not the rich and the poor, for to count a man's wealth
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.
Not the humble and proud, for in life's little span,
Who puts on vain airs, is not counted a man.

Not the happy and sad, for the swift-flying years
Bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.

No; the two kinds of people on earth that I mean,
Are the people who lift and the people who lean.

Wherever you go, you will find the earth's masses,
Are always divided in just these two classes.
And, oddly enough, you will find, too, I ween,
There is only one lifter to twenty who lean.

In which class are you? Are you easing the load,
Of overtaxed lifters, who toil down the road?
Or are you a leaner, who lets others bear
Your portion of labor and worry and care?

"In which class are you?"

SOLITUDE

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you."

LAUGH, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone,
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air,
The echoes bound to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go.
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all—
There are none to decline your nectar'd wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a large and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND OF NOD

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

COME, cuddle your head on my shoulder, dear,
Your head like the golden-rod,
And we will go sailing away from here
To the beautiful Land of Nod.
Away from life's hurry, and flurry, and worry,
Away from earth's shadows and gloom,
To a world of fair weather we'll float off together
Where roses are always in bloom.

"—cuddle your head on my shoulder,—"

Just shut up your eyes, and fold your hands,
Your hands like the leaves of a rose,
And we will go sailing to those fair lands
That never an atlas shows.
On the North and the West they are bounded by rest,
On the South and the East, by dreams;

'Tis the country ideal, where nothing is
real,
But everything only seems.

Just drop down the curtains of your dear
eyes,
Those eyes like a bright blue-bell,
And we will sail out under starlit skies,
To the land where the fairies dwell.
Down the river of sleep, our barque shall
sweep,
Till it reaches that mystical Isle
Which no man hath seen, but where all have
been,
And there we will pause awhile.
I will croon you a song as we float along,
To that shore that is blessed of God,
Then ho! for that fair land, we're off for
that rare land,
That beautiful Land of Nod.

OPIE READ

The sun is blazing out in the fields and the June-bugs are buzzing in the yard.

On turning over a book of my first short stories I have found "A Backwoods Sunday," a sketch I once memorized and will now endeavor to recite.

A BACKWOODS SUNDAY

BY OPIE READ

"It is a poem."

A SUNDAY in the backwoods of Tennessee, viewed by one whose feet rarely stray from the worn paths of active life, may hold nothing attractive, but to the old men and women—the youth and maiden of the soil—it is a poem that comes once a week to encourage young love with its soft sentiment and soothe old labor with its words of promise. In the country where the streams are so pure that they look like strips of sunshine, where the trees are so ancient that one almost stands in awe of them, where the moss, so old that it is gray, and hanging from the rocks in the ravine, looks like venerable beards growing on faces that have been hardened by years of trouble—in such a country even the most slouching clown, walking as though stepping over clods when

ploughing where the ground breaks up hard, has in his untutored heart a love of poetry. He may not be able to read—may never have heard the name of a son of genius, but in the evening, when he stands on a purple "knob," watching the soul of day sink out of sight in a far-away valley, he is a poet.

When the shadow of Saturday night falls upon a backwoods community in Tennessee, a quiet joy seems to lurk in the atmosphere. The whippoorwill has sung unheeded every night during the week, but to-night his song brings a promise of rest. The tired boy sits in the door, and, taking off his shoes, strikes them against the log door-step to knock the dirt out; and the cat that has followed the women when they went to milk the cows, comes and rubs against him. The humming-bird, looking for a late supper, buzzes among the honeysuckle blossoms, and the tree-toad cries in the locust-tree. The boy goes to bed, thrilled with an expectation. He muses: "I will see somebody to-morrow."

"He muses."

On the morrow the woods are full of

music. The great soul of day rises with a burst of glory, and the streams, bounding over the rocks or dreaming among the ferns, laugh more merrily and seem to be brighter than they were yesterday. Horses neigh near an old log-church and a swelling hymn is borne away on the blossom-scented air. The ploughboy, sitting near the spring, heeds not the sacred music, but gazes intently down the shady road. He sees some one coming—sees the fluttering of a gaudy ribbon and is thrilled. A young woman comes up the road, coyly tapping an old mare with a dogwood switch, and eager lest some one else may perform the endearing office, he hastens to help the young woman to alight. He tries to appear unconcerned as he takes hold of the bridle-rein, but he stumbles awkwardly as he leads the animal toward the horse-block. When he has helped her down and has tied the horse it is his blessed privilege to walk with the girl as far as the church-door.

"The great soul of day rises——"

"What's Jim a-doin'?" he asks, as they walk along under the embarrassing gaze of a score of men.

"Ploughed yistidy; ain't doin' nothin' to-day."

"Be here to-day, I reckon," he rejoins.

"He went to preachin' at Ebeneezer."

"What's Tom a-doin'?"

"What's Alf a-doin'?"

"Went to mill yistidy; ain't doin' nothin' to-day."

"Be here to-day, I reckon."

"He 'lowed he mout, but I don't know whether he will or not."

"What's Alf a-doin'?"

"Cut sprouts an' deadened trees yistidy; ain't doin' nothin' to-day."

"Be here to-day, I reckon."

"Yes, 'lowed he was a-comin' with Sue Prior."

"Anybody goin' home with you, Liza?"

"Not that I know of."

"Wall, if nobody else ain't spoke, I'd like to go."

"We'll see about it," she answers, and then enters the church. He saunters off and sits down under a tree where a number of young men are wallowing on shawls spread on the grass. The preacher becomes warm in his work and the ploughboy hears

him exclaim: "What can a man give in exchange for his own soul;" but he is not thinking of souls, or of an existence beyond the horizon of this life; his mind is on the girl with the gaudy ribbon, and he is asking his heart if she loves him. The shadows are now shorter and hungry men cast glances at the sun, but the preacher, shouting in broken accents, appears not to have reached the first mile-stone of his text, and it is evident that he started out with the intention of going a "Sabbath-day's journey." One young fellow places his straw hat over his face and tries to sleep, but some one tickles him with a spear of grass. An old man who has stood it as long as he could in the house, and who has come out and lain down, gets up, stretches himself, brushes a clinging leaf off his gray jeans trousers and declares: "A bite to eat would hit me harder than a sermon writ on a rock. Don't see why a man wants to talk all day."

"— his mind is on the girl —"

"Thought you was mighty fond of preachin', Uncle John," some one remarks.

"Am, but I don't want a man to go over an' over what he has already dun said. If

my folks wa'n't in thar I'd mosey off home an' git suthin' to eat."

"Good book says a man don't live by bread alone, Uncle John."

"Yas, but it don't say that he lives by preachin' alone, nuther. Hol' on; they are singin' the doxology now, an' I reckon she will soon be busted."

The ploughboy goes home with his divinity—Uncle John's daughter. "Reckon Jim will be at home?" he asks, as they ride along.

"Bet you don't."

"He mout be. Air you awful anxious to see him?"

"Not so powerful. Jest 'lowed I'd ask. I know who's yo' sweetheart," he says, after a pause.

"Bet you don't."

"Bet I do."

"Who is it then, Mr. Smarty?"

"Aleck Jones."

"Who, him? Think I'd have that freckle-faced thing?"

"Wall, if he ain't, I know who is."

"Bet you couldn't think of his name in a hundred years."

A backwoods Sunday.

"You mout think I can't, but I can."

"Wall, who, then, since you are so smart?"

"Morg Atcherson."

"Ho, I wouldn't speak to him if I was to meet him in the road."

"But you'd speak to some people if you was to meet them in the road, wouldn't you?"

"Yes, of course I would."

"Who would you speak to?"

"I'd whale him."

"Oh, lots of folks. Did you see that bird almost hit me?" she suddenly exclaims.

"I reckon he 'lowed you was a flower."

"Oh, he didn't, no such of a thing. You ought to be ashamed of yo'se'f to make fun of me thater way."

"I wa'n't makin' fun of you. Ho, if I was ter ketch anybody makin' fun of you it wouldn't be good for him."

"What would you do?"

"I'd whale him."

"You air awful brave, ain't you?"

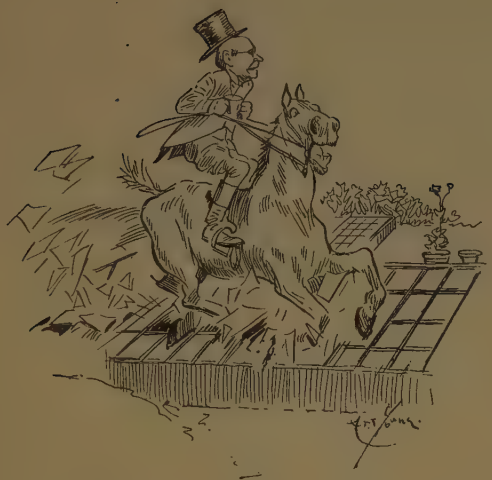
"Never mind whut I am; I know that if any man was to make fun of you he'd have me to whup."

A number of people have stopped at Uncle John's house. They sit in the large passageway running between the two sections of the log-building, and the men, who have not heard the sermon, discuss it with the women who were compelled to hear it from halting start to excited finish. The sun is blazing out in the fields and the June-bugs are buzzing in the yard. It is indeed a day of rest for the young and old, but is it a restful time for the housewife? Does that woman, with flushed face, running from the kitchen to the dining-room, and then to the spring-house for the crock jar of milk, appear to be resting? Do the young men and women who are lolling in the passage realize that they are making a slave of her? Probably not, for she assures them that it is not a bit of trouble, yet when night comes—when the company is gone—she sinks down, almost afraid to wish that Sunday might never come again, yet knowing that it is the day of her heavy bondage. Old labor has been soothed and young love has been encouraged, but her trials and anxieties have been more than doubled.

"It is indeed a day of rest."

It is night, and the boy sits in the door taking off his shoes. To-morrow he must go into the hot field, but he does not think of that. His soul is full of a buoyant love —buoyant, for the girl with the gaudy ribbon has promised to be his wife.

BILL NYE



"A morning scamper through a conservatory when the syringas and jonquils and jack roses lie cuddled up together in their little beds, is a thing to remember and look back to and pay for."

With your patient indulgence I will tell you "How to Hunt the Fox" and will also deliver one of my essays on sleep, entitled "A Blasted Snore."

HOW TO HUNT THE FOX

BY BILL NYE

"The huntsman comes."

THE joyous season for hunting is again upon us, and with the gentle fall of the autumn leaf and the sough of the scented breezes about the gnarled and naked limbs of the wailing trees, the huntsman comes with his hark and his halloo and hurrah, boys, the swift rush of the chase, the thrilling scamper 'cross country, the mad dash through the Long Islander's pumpkin-patch —also the mad dash, dash, dash of the farmer, the low moan of the disabled and frozen-toed hen as the whooping horsemen run her down ; the wild shriek of the children, the low, melancholy wail of the frightened shoat as he flees away to the straw pile, the quick yet muffled plunk of the frozen tomato, and the dull scrunch of the seed cucumber.

The huntsman now takes the flannels off

his fox, rubs his stiffened limbs with gargling oil, ties a bunch of firecrackers to his tail, and runs him around the barn a few times to see if he is in good order.

The foxhound is a cross of the bloodhound, the greyhound, the bulldog, and the chump. When you step on his tail he is said to be in full cry. The foxhound obtains from his ancestors on the bloodhound side of the house his keen scent, which enables him while in full cry 'cross country to pause and hunt for chipmunks. He also obtains from the bloodhound branch of his family a wild yearning to star in an "Uncle Tom" company, and watch little Eva meander up the flume, at two dollars per week. From the greyhound he gets his most miraculous speed, which enables him to attain a rate of velocity so great that he is unable to halt during the excitement of the chase, frequently running so far during the day that it takes him a week to get back, when, of course, all interest has died out. From the bulldog the foxhound obtains his great tenacity of purpose, his deep-seated convictions, his quick perceptions, his love of home and

"Meander up the flume."

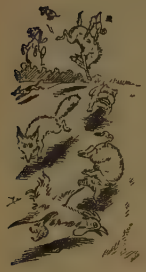
his clinging nature. From the chump the foxhound gets his high intellectuality and that mental power which enables him to distinguish almost at a glance the salient points of difference between a two-year-old steer and a two-dollar bill.

"Ought to be enough."

The fox-hound is about two feet in height, and one hundred and twenty of them would be considered an ample number for a quiet little fox-hunt. Some hunters think this number inadequate, but unless the fox be unusually skittish and crawl under the barn, one hundred and twenty foxhounds ought to be enough. The trouble generally is that hunters make too much noise, thus scaring the fox so that he tries to get away from them. This necessitates hard riding and great activity on the part of the whippers-in. Frightening a fox almost always results in sending him out of the road and compelling horsemen to stop in order to take down a panel of fence every little while that they may follow the animal, and before you can get the fence put up again the owner is on the ground, and after you have made change with him and mounted again

the fox may be nine miles away. Try by all means to keep your fox in the road!

It makes a great difference what kind of fox you use, however. I once had a fox on my Pumpkin Butte estates that lasted me three years, and I never knew him to shy or turn out of the road for anything but a loaded team. He was the best fox for hunting purposes that I ever had. Every spring I would sprinkle him with Scotch snuff and put him away in the bureau till fall. He would then come out bright and chipper. He was always ready to enter into the chase with all the chic and embonpoint of a regular Kenosha, and nothing pleased him better than to be about eight miles in advance of my thoroughbred pack in full cry, scampering 'cross country, while stretching back a few miles behind the dogs followed a pale young man and his fiancier, each riding a horse that had sat down too hard on his tail some time and driven it into his system about six joints.



Some hunters, who are madly and passionately devoted to the sport, leap their horses over fences, moats, donjon keeps, hedges,

and currant bushes with utter sang-froid and the wild, unfettered toot ongsomble of a brass band. It is one of the most spirited and touchful of sights to see a young fox-hunter going home through the gloaming with a full cry in one hand and his pancreas in the other.

Some like to be in at the death, as it is called, and it is certainly a laudable ambition. To see one hundred and twenty dogs hold out against a ferocious fox weighing nine pounds; to watch the brave little band of dogs and whippers-in and horses with sawed-off tails, making up in heroism what they lack in numbers, succeeding at last in ridding the country of the ferocious brute which has long been the acknowledged foe of the human race, is indeed a fine sight.

"Is indeed a fine sight."

We are too apt to regard fox-hunting merely as a relaxation, a source of pleasure, and the result of a desire to do the way people do in the novels which we steal from English authors; but this is not all. To successfully hunt a fox, to jump fences 'cross country like an unruly steer, is no child's play. To ride all day on a very hot and

restless saddle, trying to lope while your horse is trotting, giving your friends a good view of the country between yourself and your horse, then leaping stone walls, breaking your collar-bone in four places, pulling out one eye and leaving it hanging on a plum-tree, or going home at night with your transverse colon wrapped around the pommel of your saddle and your liver in an old newspaper, requires the greatest courage.

"A freight car is the best thing."

Too much stress cannot be placed upon the costume worn while fox-hunting, and in fact, that is, after all, the life and soul of the chase. For ladies, nothing looks better than a close-fitting jacket, sewed together with thread of the same shade, and a skirt. Neat-fitting cavalry boots and a plug hat complete the costume. Then, with a hue in one hand and a cry in the other, she is prepared to mount. Lead the horse up to a stone wall or a freight car and spring lightly into the saddle with a glad cry. A freight car is the best thing from which to mount a horse, but it is too unwieldy and frequently delays the chase. For this reason, too, much luggage should not be carried on a fox-hunt.

The meet.

Some gentlemen carry a change of canes, neatly concealed in a shawl-strap, but even this may be dispensed with.

For gentlemen, a dark, four-button cut-away coat, with neat, loose-fitting white-panties, will generally scare a fox into convulsions, so that he may be easily killed with a club. A short-waisted plug hat may be worn also, in order to distinguish the hunter from the whipper-in, who wears a baseball cap. The only fox-hunting I have ever done was on board an impetuous, tough-bitted, fore-and-aft horse that had emotional insanity. I was dressed in a swallow-tail coat, waistcoat of Scotch plaid Turkish towelling, and a pair of close-fitting breeches of etiquette tucked into my boot-tops. As I was away from home at the time and could not reach my own steed I was obliged to mount a spirited steed, with high, intellectual hips, one white eye, and a big red nostril that you could set a Shanghai hen in. This horse, as soon as the pack broke into full cry, climbed over a fence that had wrought-iron briers on it, lit in a corn-field, stabbed his hind leg through a sere and yellow pumpkin,

which he wore the rest of the day, with seven yards of pumpkin vine streaming out behind, and away we dashed 'cross country. I remained mounted not because I enjoyed it, for I did not, but because I dreaded to dismount. I hated to get off in pieces. If I can't get off a horse's back as a whole, I would rather adhere to the horse. I will adhere that I did so.

We did not see the fox, but we saw almost everything else. I remember, among other things, of riding through a hothouse, and how I enjoyed it. A morning scamper through a conservatory when the syringas and jonquils and jack roses lie cuddled up together in their little beds, is a thing to remember and look back to and pay for. To stand knee-deep in glass and gladiolas, to smell the mashed and mussed up mignonette and the last fragrant sigh of the scrunched heliotrope beneath the hoof of your horse, while far away the deep-mouthed baying of the hoarse hounds, hotly hugging the reeking trail of the anise-seed bag, calls on the gorgeously caparisoned hills to give back their merry music or fork it over to other

answering hills, is joy to the huntsman's heart.

On, on I rode with my unconfined locks streaming behind me in the autumn wind. On and still on I sped, the big, bright pumpkin slipping up and down the gambrel of my spirited horse at every jump. On, and ever on, we went, shedding terror and pumpkin-seeds along our glittering track till my proud steed ran his leg in a gopher hole and fell over one of those machines that they put on a high-headed steer to keep him from jumping fences. As the horse fell, the necklace of this hickory poke flew up and adjusted itself around my throat. In an instant my steed was on his feet again, and gayly we went forward while the prong of this barbarous appliance, ever and anon ploughed into a brand new culvert or rooted up a clover field. Every time it ran into an orchard or a cemetery it would jar my neck and knock me silly. But I could see with joy that it reduced the speed of my horse. At last as the sun went down, reluctantly, it seemed to me, for he knew that he would never see such riding again, my ili-

spent horse fell with a hollow moan, curled up, gave a spasmodic quiver with his little, nerveless, sawed-off tail, and died.

The other huntsmen succeeded in treeing the anise-seed bag at sundown, in time to catch the six o'clock train home.

Fox-hunting is one of the most thrilling pastimes of which I know, and for young men whose parents have amassed large sums of money in the intellectual pursuit of hides and tallow, the meet, the chase, the scamper, the full cry, the cover, the stellated fracture, the yelp of the pack, the yip, the yell of triumph, the confusion, the whoop, the holla, the hallos, the hurrah, the abrasion, the snort of the hunter, the concussion, the sward, the open, the earth-stopper, the strangulated hernia, the glad cry of the hound as he brings home the quivering seat of the peasant's pantaloons, the yelp of joy as he lays at his master's feet, the strawberry mark of the rustic—all, all are exhilarating to the sons of our American nobility.

Fox-hunting combines the danger and the wild tumultuous joy of the skating-rink, the toboggan slide, the mush-and-milk sociable, and the straw ride.

"Fell with a hollow moan."

A BLASTED SNORE

BY BILL NYE

SLEEP, under favorable circumstances, is a great boon. Sleep, if natural and undisturbed, is surely as useful as any other scientific discovery. Sleep, whether administered at home or abroad, under the soporific influences of an underpaid preacher or the unyielding wooden cellar-door that is used as a blanket in the sleeping-car, is a harmless dissipation and a cheerful relaxation.

Let me study a man for the first hour after he has wakened and I will judge him more correctly than I would to watch him all winter in the Legislature. We think we are pretty well acquainted with our friends, but we are not thoroughly conversant with their peculiarities until we have seen them wake up in the morning.

"A cheerful relaxation."

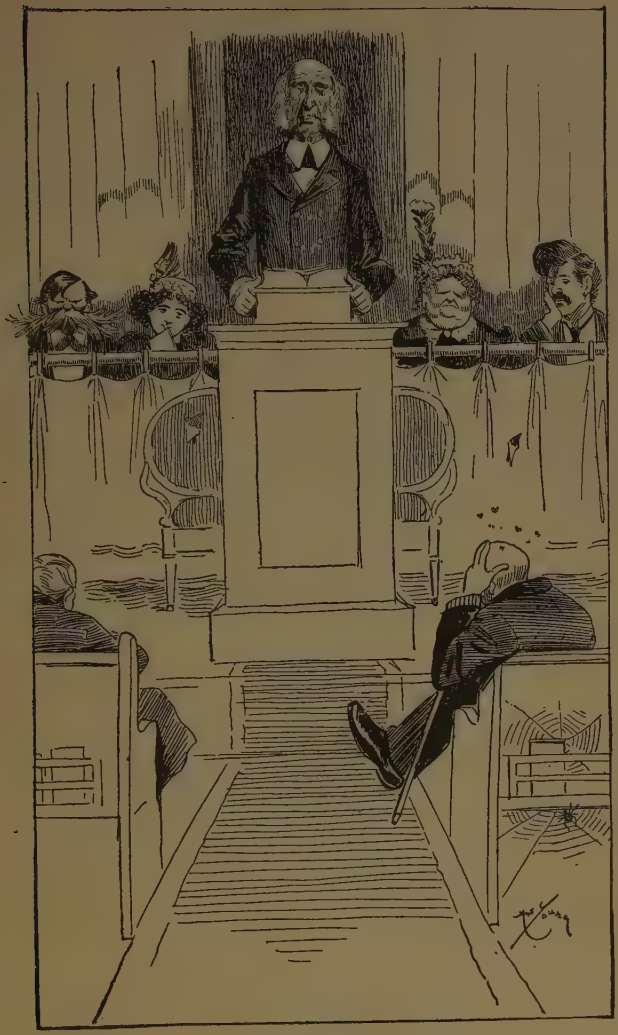
I have often looked at the men I meet and thought what a shock it must be to the wives

of some of them to wake up and see their husbands before they have had time to prepare, and while their minds are still chaotic.

"That fell on her father's heart."

The first glimpse of a large, fat man, whose brain has drooped down behind his ears, and whose wheezy breath wanders around through the catacombs of his head and then emerges from his nostrils with a shrill snort like the yelp of the damned, must be a charming picture for the eye of a delicate and beautiful second wife; one who loves to look on green meadows and glorious landscapes; one who has always wakened with a song and a ripple of laughter that fell on her father's heart like a shower of sunshine in the sombre green of the valley.

It is a pet theory of mine that to be pleasantly wakened is half the battle for the day. If we could be wakened by the refrain of a joyous song, instead of having our front teeth knocked out by one of those patent pillow-sham holders that sit up on their hind feet at the head of the bed, until we dream that we are just about to enter Paradise and have just passed our competitive examination, and which then swoop down and mash



Under the soporific influences of an underpaid preacher.

us across the bridge of the nose, there would be less insanity in our land and death would be regarded more in the light of a calamity.

When you waken a child do it in a pleasant way. Do not take him by the ear and pull him out of bed. It is disagreeable for the child, and injures the general *tout ensemble* of the ear. Where children go to sleep with tears on their cheeks and are wakened by the yowl of dyspeptic parents, they have a pretty good excuse for crime in after years. If I sat on the bench in such cases I would mitigate the sentence.

"Makes the hair pull."

It is a genuine pleasure for me to wake up a good-natured child in a good-natured way. Surely it is better from those dimpled lids to chase the sleep with a caress than to knock out slumber with a harsh word and a bed-slat.

No one should be suddenly wakened from a sound sleep. A sudden awaking reverses the magnetic currents, and makes the hair pull, to borrow an expression from Dante. The awaking should be natural, gradual, and deliberate.

A sad thing occurred last summer on an

Omaha train. It was a very warm day, and in the smoking-car a fat man, with a magenta fringe of whiskers over his Adam's apple, and a light, ecru lambrequin of real camel's-hair around the suburbs of his head, might have been discovered.

He could have opened his mouth wider, perhaps, but not without injuring the main-spring of his neck and turning his epiglottis out-of doors.

He was asleep.

He was not only slumbering, but he was putting the earnestness and passionate devotion of his whole being into it. His shiny, oil-cloth grip, with the roguish tip of a discarded collar just peeping out at the side, was up in the iron wall-pocket of the car. He also had, in the seat with him, a market-basket full of misfit lunch and a two-bushel bag containing extra apparel. On the floor he had a crock of butter with a copy of the Punkville *Palladium* and *Stock-Grower's Guardian* over the top.

He slumbered on in a rambling sort of a way, snoring all the time in monosyllables, except when he erroneously swallowed his

"Up in the iron wall-pocket."

He was asleep.

tonsils, and then he would struggle awhile and get black in the face, while the passengers vainly hoped that he had strangled.

While he was thus slumbering, with all the eloquence and enthusiasm of a man in the full meridian of life, the train stopped with a lurch, and the brakeman touched his shoulder.

"Here's your town," he said. "We only stop a minute. You'll have to hustle."

The man, who had been far away, wrestling with Morpheus, had removed his hat, coat, and boots, and when he awoke his feet absolutely refused to go back into the same quarters.

"You'll have to hustle."

At first he looked around reproachfully at the people in the car. Then he reached up and got his oil-cloth grip from the bracket. The bag was tied together with a string, and as he took it down the string untied. Then we all discovered that this man had been on the road for a long time, with no object, apparently, except to evade laundries. All kinds of articles fell out in the aisle. I remember seeing a chest-protector and a linen coat, a slab of seal-brown gingerbread and

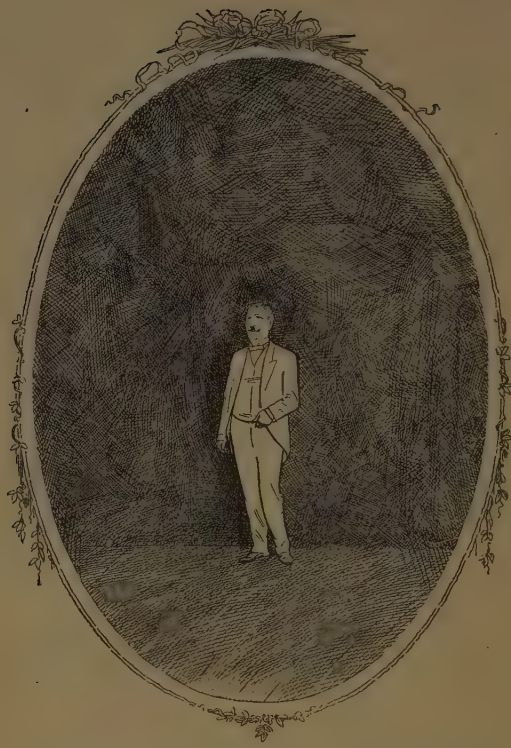
a pair of stoga boots, a hair-brush and a bologna sausage, a plug of tobacco and a porous plaster.

He gathered up what he could in both arms, made two trips to the door and threw out all he could, tried again to put his number eleven feet into his number nine boots, gave it up, and socked himself out of the car as it began to move, while the brakeman bombarded him through the window for two miles with personal property, groceries, dry-goods, boots and shoes, gents' furnishing goods, hardware, notions, *bric-à-brac*, red herrings, clothing, doughnuts, vinegar bitters, and facetious remarks.

Then he picked up the retired snorer's railroad check from the seat, and I heard him say: "Why, dog on it, that wasn't his town after all."

WILL CARLETON

"I touched him on religion, and the joys my heart had known :
And I found that he had very similar notions of his own."



I will recite "The Christmas Baby" and "The Lightning Rod Dispenser" from Farm Legends.

THE CHRISTMAS BABY

BY WILL CARLETON

"Th'art welcome, little bonny brid,
But shouldn't ha' come just when tha' did:
Teimes are bad."
—*English Ballad.*

"Crowdin' yerself amongst us."

HOOT! ye little rascal! ye come it on me this way,
Crowdin' yerself amongst us this blusterin' winter's day,
Knowin' that we already have three of ye, an' seven,
An' tryin' to make yerself out a Christmas present o' Heaven?

Ten of ye have we now, Sir, for this world to abuse;
An' Bobbie he have no waistcoat, an' Nellie she have no shoes,

An' Sammy he have no shirt, Sir (I tell it to his shame),
An' the one that was just before ye we ain't had time to name!

An' all o' the banks be smashin', an' on us poor folk fall;
An' Boss he whittles the wages when work's to be had at all;
An' Tom he have cut his foot off, an' lies in a woful plight,
An' all of us wonders at mornin' as what we shall eat at night;

—ye rascal!

An' but for your father an' Sandy a-findin' somewhat to do,
An' but for the preacher's good wife, who often helps us through,
An' but for your poor dear mother a-doin' twice her part,
Ye'd 'a' seen us all in heaven afore *ye* was ready to start!

An' now *ye* have come, ye rascal! so healthy an' fat an' sound,
A weighin', I'll wager a dollar, the full of a dozen pound!

With yer mother's eyes a-flashin', yer father's
flesh an' build,
An' a good big mouth an' stomach all ready
for to be filled!

No, no! don't cry, my baby! hush up, my
pretty one!
Don't get my chaff in yer eye, boy—I only
was just in fun.
Ye'll like us when ye know us, although
we're cur'us folks;
But we don't get much victual, an' half our
livin' is jokes!

Why, boy, did ye take me in earnest? come,
sit upon my knee;
I'll tell ye a secret, youngster, I'll name ye
after me.
Ye shall have all yer brothers an' sisters
with ye to play,
An' ye shall have yer carriage, an' ride out
every day!

Why, boy, do ye think ye'll suffer? I'm
gettin' a trifle old,
But it'll be many years yet before I lose my
hold:

"I only was just in fun."

An' if I should fall on the road, boy, still,
them's yer brothers there,
An' not a rogue of 'em ever would see ye
harmed a hair!

Say! when ye come from heaven, my little
namesake dear,
Did ye see, 'mongst the little girls there, a
face like this one here?
That was yer little sister—she died a year
ago,
An' all of us cried like babies when they laid
her under the snow!

Hang it! if all the rich men I ever see or
knew
Came here with all their traps, boy, an'
offered them for you,
I'd show them to the door, Sir, so quick
they'd think it odd,
Before I'd sell to another my Christmas gift
from God!

"Before I'd sell to another—"

THE LIGHTNING-ROD DISPENSER

BY WILL CARLETON

WHICH this railroad reminds me, in an underhanded way,
Of a lightning-rod dispenser that came down on me one day;
Oiled to order in his motions—sanctimonious in his mien—
Hands as white as any baby's, an' a face unnat'ral clean;
Not a wrinkle had his raiment, teeth and linen glittered white,
And his new-constructed neck-tie was an interestin' sight!
Which I almost wish a razor had made red that white-skinned throat,
And that new-constructed neck-tie had composed a hangman's knot,

"*His new-constructed neck-tie.*"

Ere he brought his sleek-trimmed carcass for
my woman-folks to see,
And his buzz-saw tongue a-runnin' for to
gouge a gash in me!

Still I couldn't help but like him—as I fear
I al'ays must,
The gold o' my own doctrines in a fellow-
heap o' dust;
For I saw that my opinions, when I fired
'em round by round,
Brought back an answerin' volley of a mighty
similar sound.
I touched him on religion, and the joys my
heart had known:
And I found that he had very similar notions
of his own.
I told him of the doubtings that made sad
my boyhood years:
Why, he's laid awake till morning with that
same old breed of fears!
I pointed up the pathway that I hoped to
heaven to go:
He was on that very ladder, only just a round
below!

"I pointed up the path-way."

Our politics was different, and at first he galled and winced;
But I arg'ed him so able, he was very soon convinced.
And 'twas tow'rd the middle of a hungry summer day—
There was dinner on the table, and I asked him, would he stay?
And he sat him down among us—everlastin' trim and neat—
And he asked a short, crisp blessin', almost good enough to eat!
Then he fired upon the mercies of our Everlastin' Friend,
Till he gi'n the Lord Almighty a good first-class recommend;
And for full an hour we listened to that sugar-coated scamp—
Talkin' like a blessed angel—eatin' like a blasted tramp!

"And he sat him down."

My wife—she liked the stranger, smiling on him warm and sweet;
(It al'ays flatters women when their guests are on the eat!)

And he hinted that some ladies never lose their youthful charms,
And caressed her yearlin' baby, an' received it in his arms.
My sons and daughters liked him—for he had progressive views,
And he chewed the cud o' fancy, and gi'n down the latest news;
And I couldn't help but like him—as I fear I al'ays must,
The gold of my own doctrines in a fellow-heap o' dust.

"With a tear in his off-eye."

He was chiselin' desolation through a piece of apple-pie,
When he paused and gazed upon us, with a tear in his off-eye,
And said, "Oh, happy family!—your joys they make me sad!
They all the time remind me of the dear ones once I had!
A babe as sweet as this one; a wife almost as fair;
A little girl with ringlets—like that one over there.

"Like that one over there"

But had I not neglected the means within my way,
Then they might still be living, and loving me to-day.

"One night there came a tempest; the thunder-peals were dire;
The clouds that marched above us were shooting bolts of fire;
In my own house I, lying, was thinking, to my blame,
How little I had guarded against those bolts of flame,
When crash!—through roof and ceiling the deadly lightning cleft,
And killed my wife and children, and only I was left.

"Only I was left."

"Since then afar I've wandered, and naught for life I've cared,
Save to save others' loved ones whose lives have yet been spared;
Since then it is my mission, where'er by sorrow tossed,
To sell to worthy people good lightning-rods at cost.

Have yet been spared.

With sure and strong protection I'll clothe
your buildings o'er;
'Twill cost you—twenty dollars (perhaps a
trifle more);
Whatever else it comes to, at lowest price
I'll put;
You simply sign a contract to pay so much
per foot").

"I—signed it!"

I—signed it! while my family, all approvin'
stood about;
The villain dropped a tear on't—but he
didn't blot it out!
That self-same day, with wagons came some
rascals great and small;
They hopped up on my buildin's just as if
they owned 'em all;
They hewed 'em and they hacked 'em—
ag'in' my loud desires—
They trimmed 'em off with gewgaws, and
they bound 'em down with wires.
They hacked 'em and they hewed 'em, and
they hewed and hacked 'em still,
And every precious minute kep' a-runnin'
up a bill.

"A-runnin' up a bill."

To find my soft-spoke neighbor, did I rave
and rush an' run:
He was suppin' with a neighbor, just a few
miles farther on.
"Do you think," I loudly shouted, "that
I need a mile o' wire,
For to save each separate haycock out o'
heaven's consumin' fire?
Did you think, to keep my buildin's out o'
some uncertain harm,
I was goin' to deed you over all the balance
of my farm?"

"I loudly shouted."

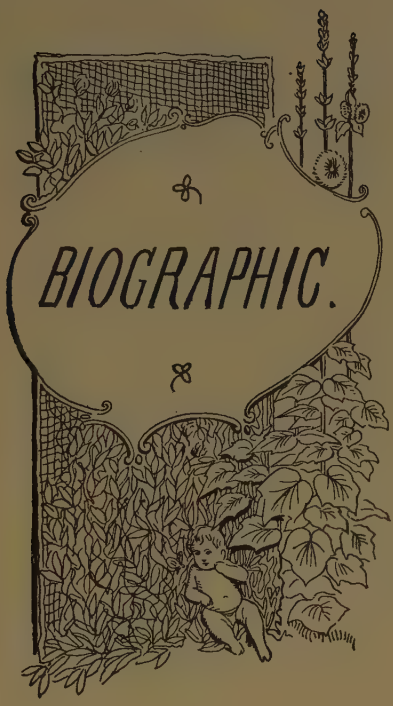
He silenced me with silence in a very little
while,
And then trotted out the contract with a re-
assuring smile;
And for half an hour explained it, with ex-
asperating skill,
While his myrmurdums kep' probably a-run-
nin' up my bill.
He held me to that contract with a firmness
queer to see;
'Twas the very first occasion he had dis-
agreed with me!

"He had disagreed with me."

And for that 'ere thunder story, ere the rascal finally went,
I paid two hundred dollars, if I paid a single cent.

And if any lightnin' rodist wants a dinner-dialogue
With the restaurant department of an enterprisin' dog,
Let him set his mouth a-runnin', just inside my outside gate;
And I'll bet two hundred dollars that he don't have long to wait.

"*I'll bet two hundred dollars.*"


BIOGRAPHIC.

Yet here's this youngster on my knee
Knows all the things I used to know;
To think! I once was wise as he!
But that was very long ago!

— Eugene Field.

August 8, 1894.
Buena Park, Ill..
"The Creche."

"THE CHILDREN'S POET"

EUGENE FIELD was born in St. Louis, Mo., on the third day of September, 1850. He died in Chicago on the fourth day of November, 1895.

Mr. Field was of New England stock, his parents being Vermonters. Roswell M. Field, his father, was a man of marked intellectuality. He was Dred Scott's first attorney in the case which resulted in the famous Dred Scott decision by the United States Supreme Court. Eugene Field's mother died in 1857, and the boy, who was then seven years old, went to live with his aunt, Miss Mary Field French, of Amherst, Mass. He remained under her care until he was nineteen years of age.

When he was nine

The Eugene Field Home, Buena Park, Chicago.

years old he went for a seventeen months' visit to the old homestead in Vermont, where his grandmother lived. It was his first experience of country life, and he has said that his love of nature dated from that visit. His grandmother, who was an old-school New England Congregationalist, gave young Field thorough discipline in Biblical lore. She gave him ten cents for every sermon he wrote, and Eugene, being phenomenally versatile even at that age, earned a good many dimes. The first money he earned in a literary way was by writing those sermons. Although he did not like it, his grandmother made him commit to memory section after section of the Bible, with the result that in later life he regarded his knowledge of the holy book as invaluable. His father had taken pains to perfect him in the classics. He required the correspondence between them to be carried on in Latin.

Between 1868 and 1871 Mr. Field attended successively Williams College, Knox College, at Galesburg, Ill., and the Missouri State University, at Columbia. His father died in 1869. In 1871, having attained

his majority, he came into possession of $60,000, his share of his father's estate. What he did with that money was typical of his generosity. He took one of his intimate friends, a brother of the lady (Julia S. Comstock, of St. Joseph, Mo.) he afterward married, and went to Europe.

"I spent six months and my patrimony in France, Italy, Ireland and England," is the way Field described the trip. "I just threw the money around. Just think of it, a boy of twenty-one, without father or mother, and with $60,000! It was a lovely experience. I had money. I paid it out for experience—it was plenty. Experience was lying around loose." All his life his money was apt to go in gratification of the impulse of the moment.

Mr. Field's picturesque rainy day garb.

On his return home with an empty purse, he went into journalism, beginning as a reporter on the St. Louis "Journal." Subsequently he was city editor of the St. Joseph "Gazette," editorial writer on the St. Louis "Journal" and St. Louis "Times-Journal," managing editor of the Kansas City "Times" and the Denver "Tribune." In

1883 he went to the Chicago "News" (now the "Record") and began the daily column of "Sharps and Flats," which made him one of the best known and most relished newspaper writers in the country. His connection with that paper continued until his death. There was rarely a day that Field's full column failed to appear, but outside of this task he found time to do much additional writing, to lecture and read from his works, and to produce most of the child poems which have made him universally famous.

How Mr. Field got his salary increased.

The way in which Mr. Field once secured an increase of salary from the editor of the Chicago "News" is characteristic of the man. Morning after morning he had gone to the office fully resolved to make a demand for more pay in the customary form, for the need of an increase had grown pressing; but each time his heart failed him. Suddenly, one morning, there appeared before the astonished editor a tall, starved-looking

man of beggarly aspect, followed by a line of the most pitiable-looking children imaginable. The clothes of all were tattered and worn, and their faces were dirty, gaunt, and hungry. It was Field, his four small children, and several sorry-looking specimens of childhood whom he had picked up on the street. The players had been well coached. All stretched forth pleading hands and looked appealingly into the editor's eyes, and Mr. Field, with a beggar's sadness, asked: "Please, sir, won't you raise my salary?" The prayer was promptly granted.

For some years before his death Mr. Field lived in a very attractive home in Buena Park, a suburb of Chicago, and there, in what he loved to call his "den," he did much of his better work. In that "den," literally almost buried in newspapers, surrounded by thousands of objects, beautiful or grotesque, which showed the rage of the collector, he wrought methodically many hours a day, taking wonderful pains with his work, pondering and doubting, revising and revising again. He sat in an arm-chair that once belonged to Jefferson Davis, and on his

table was an inkstand used by Napoleon. Near at hand were Charles A. Dana's scissors and Gladstone's famous axe, presented to him by Mr. Gladstone himself. Scores of mechanical toys and small images, hundreds of dolls and odd bottles of different shapes and sizes, old China, strange pewter dishes were all jumbled together about him.

Eugene Field's work-shop.

In writing of his likes and dislikes, Mr. Field said, among other things: "I believe in ghosts, in witches, and in fairies. I adore dolls. I dislike all exercise, and play all games indifferently. I love to read in bed. I hate wars, armies, soldiers, guns, and fireworks. If I could have my way I should make the abuse of horses, dogs, and cattle a penal offence; I should abolish all dog laws and dog-catchers, and I would punish severely everybody who caught and caged birds." The poet often had canaries in his "den," but they were not confined to the limits of a cage. They flew about the room, often alighting on his shoulders while he wrote.

The accompanying full-page picture of Mr. Field was made at his home one hot day in August, 1894. While posing, with the usual injunction not to move any more than necessary, he heard the patter of his little boy "Posey's" feet on the stairs.

"Come, 'Posey'; come to papa," he called. Forgetting his special sitting, he went to the door, caught the lusty little fellow in his arms, came back, and sat down, saying, caressingly: "Well, course, 'Posey' wants his picture taken, too." A new leaf was turned in the sketch-book, and the picture of father and child was made. Other children came in during the sitting, and still others could be heard playing in the yard. There were children everywhere. Mr. Field loved to have it so. Retaining as a man much of his own boyish sportfulness, he easily made himself with children as one of themselves. The sketch being finished the poet wrote under it an appropriate stanza from "Long Ago," and inscribed in a corner of the drawing, in his fine hand: "Buena Park, Ill., 'The Creche,'" and, after writing it, he looked up with a smile and said:

"You know people always call our place 'The Creche.' Pretty good name, too."

Among the published works of Eugene Field are: "A Little Book of Western Verse," "A Little Book of Profitable Tales," "With Trumpet and Drum," "Second Book of Verse," "Love Songs of Childhood," "Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac," "Echoes from the Sabine Farm," and "The Holy Cross and Other Tales." All but the last two are published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

The three poems selected for this volume are used with permission from the author and the publishers.

"Seein' Things" is from "Love Songs of Childhood," "Little Boy Blue" and "Long Ago" from "A Little Book of Western Verse."

As caught on my way home for Christmas
Taking "mine ease in mine inn for an hour"

Will Carleton

"A PIONEER POET"

WILL CARLETON, among the first of native poets to idealize in song the simple farm life of our country, was born on the twenty-first day of October, 1845, on a farm near Hudson, Mich. His father was a practical, hard-working, pioneer farmer. His mother often wrote verses of merit. Mr. Carleton was filled with an ambition to become a poet when he was a mere lad. His first poem, written when he was ten years old, was a letter in rhyme to an older sister. That sister had considerable poetic talent herself, but she died at an early age. The lad was also ambitious to become an orator, and to that end practised in the fields of the farm, with the sheep, cows, and horses as an audience. He had an eager desire for learning, going to the District School winters and working on his father's farm summers.

A course at the village High School being completed, he longed to go to College. His

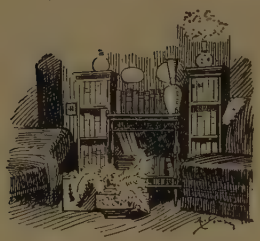
father could not afford to send him, so he taught school for four years at sixteen dollars a month, in order to earn the money necessary to make a start. At the age of twenty-one he entered Hillsdale College, at Hillsdale, Mich. He ran short of money at the close of his Junior year. That was campaign year, 1868, and he wrote a campaign poem entitled "Fax." He decided to "try it on" in a town at a distance from Hillsdale. A small room was hired in which to deliver the poetic lecture. To advertise the event Mr. Carleton bought a large amount of wall-paper for a small amount of money, and in a paint-shop lettered gaudy posters which he tacked up in conspicuous places about town. A few people heard the lecture and declared it was so good that it must be repeated in a larger hall. A church was secured and a large audience was present. Several dollars above expenses were cleared, and in that and neighboring towns Carleton made enough money during his vacation, by delivering the lecture, to complete his College course. At the Commencement he read a poem entitled "Rifts in the Cloud."

At graduation he was practically penniless, and at a loss to know what to do for a living. He was too ambitious to go back to farming, and revolted at the idea of resuming his work as schoolmaster. His ambition was to become a recognized poet, and one day, by way of experiment, he sent a poem to a humble paper in Chicago. It pleased the editor, who offered him a position on his staff at twelve dollars a week. He accepted eagerly. A few months later he returned to Michigan, the editor of the Hillsdale "Standard" having offered him one-third of his income to take charge of the paper.

Sketch from an early portrait of Mr. Carleton.

It was while editing the "Standard" that Mr. Carleton brought out his first volume of poems, bearing all the expense himself, publishers having refused it. A thousand copies were printed, most of which the poet peddled out among his friends. The book was favorably noticed by the press and gave the author some standing. Soon after that he began writing poems for the "Toledo Blade," receiving no compensation. The editor liked and published them, but none seemed to hit the public taste until "Betsy and I Are Out" was printed. It was cop-

ied everywhere, and finally the editor of "Harper's Weekly" asked Mr. Carleton to send him some verses. He wrote and sent "Over the Hills to the Poorhouse," for which he received thirty dollars, greatly to his surprise. It was the first poem for which he had received money. He continued to write for the "Weekly," and soon the Harpers published a volume of his works, "Farm Ballads." "Farm Legends," "Farm Festivals," "City Ballads" and other volumes followed in rapid succession.



A corner in Mr. Carleton's library.

In 1880 Mr. Carleton married and moved to Brooklyn, where he still lives. He writes much and spends a portion of each year lecturing and reading from his works. "The First Settler's Story" is Mr. Carleton's own favorite of all his poems.

"Betsy and I Are Out" and "Over the Hills to the Poorhouse" being, perhaps, the author's most celebrated productions, it is interesting to learn how they were inspired. In 1871 Mr. Carleton was much impressed by the prevalence of divorces, and often

strayed into the court-room in Hillsdale to hear the testimony in various cases. He saw and heard there the domestic troubles of others, and they gave him the idea of the former poem. The characters in it represent no one in particular, intended only to be typical of a class. Near Hillsdale was the County Poorhouse, between which and the town proper was a small hill. The poet often went to the almshouse to see and talk with the unfortunate inmates. He was particularly touched by the case of an aged couple, husband and wife, who had been sent to the institution by their children. Their sad lot, of which, however, they did not complain, suggested the latter poem.

Mr. Carleton's poetical works include "Farm Legends," "Farm Ballads," "Farm Festivals," "City Legends," "City Festivals," "Rhymes of Our Planet," etc.

"The Lightning Rod Dispenser" and "The Christmas Baby" are selected for this book from "Farm Legends," with the permission of the author and publishers. All of Mr. Carleton's works are published by Harper Brothers, New York.

Tells all the People about the
old French towns of the Illinois

Mary Hartwell Catherwood

MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD

Mrs. Mary Hartwell Catherwood was born in the little town of Luray, O., on the sixteenth day of December, 1847. She was the daughter of a country physician, who was descended from a line of Scotch-Irish baronets, the Scott family. He removed with his young family to Illinois long before the prairies were drained and cultivated. He fell a victim to the arduous duties of his profession in that new and unsettled country, and died when his daughter was ten years of age. Her mother died a year later.

Mary Hartwell was always given to story-making, and even at that early period of her life she knew well what she intended to do; indeed, she cannot remember a time when she did not have a well formulated idea of what her great work in life would be. She was going to write stories. In fact, at that age she had already made notable childish excursions into the realms of literature. She grew up in the home of a relative, and in the

female college at Granville, O., from which institution she was graduated in 1868.

In 1877 Miss Hartwell became the wife of Mr. James S. Catherwood and most of her best literary work has been done since then. Her one notable production previous to that time was "A Woman in Armor," published in 1875. Mrs. Catherwood's first great literary success was the production of "The Romance of Dollard." Three years before the novel appeared Mrs. Catherwood had a deep sorrow, and, for a change and diversion of mind, she went to spend a part of one summer in Canada with the family of a friend, who was the United States Consul at Sherbrooke. While there she made the history of the old French régime a special study, and became deeply interested in the romances of the Provinces. She read the comprehensive historical compilations of Parkman, and from them she got the inspiration for her story.

Three years later she took the completed "Romance of Dollard," in manuscript, to New York City. Her husband, with the true Western idea of business, urged her to do so, "and I wanted to go," said Mrs.

Catherwood. She carried with her a letter from James Whitcomb Riley, who is a friend of her husband and herself, to the editor of "The Century," Mr. Richard Watson Gilder. When she offered him the novel Mr. Gilder laughed, showed her the vast quantities of accumulated manuscripts in the office, and said:

"You might as well expect to be struck by lightning as to have a long story accepted here."

Three or four days later, when the contract for its publication was made, Mr. Gilder said: "The lightning has struck."

Mrs. Catherwood's home is in Hoopeston, Ill., a small prairie city on a direct line between Chicago and Indianapolis. Here the writer lives a busy life, for, besides her literary work and her home to look after, she is actively identified with the affairs of the church of which she is a member. She has one child, a daughter. When asked if she had any fads or pets, Mrs. Catherwood replied: "I have no fads that I know of, but I have a few pets, and chief among them is my little daughter."

Hearth in Mrs. Catherwood's home.

Mrs. Catherwood frequently visits in Chicago, and on the occasion of one of these visits the accompanying sketch of her was made. She spends at least one day of each week in the city at work in the great and growing libraries. The Catherwood home in Hoopeston is a delightful place where the neighbors love to gather, and one of the most charming spots in it is the big hearth, about the open fire of which children especially delight in congregating, to listen to the author's well-told tales. A few years ago Mrs. Catherwood spent many months in France making an exhaustive research for material for her latest work, a life of Joan d'Arc. Among her better known publications are: "Craque-o'-Doom," "Rocky Fork," "Old Caravan Days," "The Secrets of Roseladies," "Old Kaskaskia," "The Romance of Dollard," "The Lady of Fort St. John," "The Spirit of an Illinois Town," "The Chase of St. Castin," "The Dogberry Ranch" and "The Story of Tonty." The selection in "Authors' Readings" is republished by permission of The Century Company, New York, and the author.

I've noticed — more'n likely so have you —
That things don't happen, when you want 'em to.

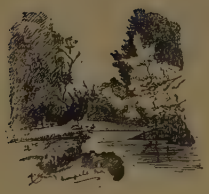
— James Whitcomb Riley

"THE HOOSIER POET"

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, popularly known as the "Hoosier Poet," was born in Greenfield, Ind., in 1854. Greenfield is a little, ragged village—half country, half town. Mr. Riley was brought up there, not living in direct daily contact with farmers, but just enough removed from them to have the rural dialect impress itself upon his mind. His poetic instinct manifested itself early. When he was little more than a baby he wrote his first verse—a four-line motto for a comic valentine he had drawn.

Until recent years the poet cared little for books, especially school books, but he was always deep versed in Nature's lore and the secrets she imparts to those only whom she loves. He received only the merest rudiments of a common-school education, for he would not study, preferring to gaze longingly out of the window with thoughts of "green fields and running brooks."

To some extent Mr. Riley inherits his poetic ability. His father, Captain Reuben A. Riley, a lawyer, was something of a poet, many of his productions having been published in the local papers. An uncle, James Riley, also has a considerable fame as a verse writer. It was from Captain Lee O. Harris, his schoolmaster, however, that Mr. Riley got the training which has done most toward making him a great poet. Mr. Harris is a poet of merit and had written good verse before James Whitcomb Riley was born. He recognized the poetic ability of his lesson-hating pupil and a mutual admiration sprung up between them. They took long walks together through woods and fields and "up and down old Brandywine."



The old swimmin' hole.

People who have heard Mr. Riley read will not be surprised to learn that at one time he thought seriously of becoming an actor. He had rare dramatic talent when a boy and took a leading part in all local amateur performances. When he was a mere youth he made a great "hit" in a perform-

ance given for the purpose of raising funds to purchase a band-wagon for the Greenfield Brass Band, the same organization of which he long afterwards wrote:

"And when the boys 'u'd saranade, I've laid so still in bed
I've even heerd the locus'-blossoms droppin' on the shed
When 'Lily Dale,' er 'Hazel Dell,' had sobbed and died away—
. . . I want to hear the *old* band play."

Captain Harris wrote the play and made the leading rôle expressly to fit the talent of young Riley. The play was produced five nights, and more than enough money was cleared to purchase the band-wagon.

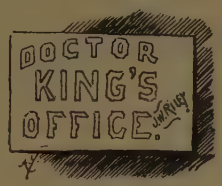
Mr. Riley's father intended to make a lawyer out of him, but when the lad found that Political Economy and Blackstone did not rhyme he tired of law, and one day ran away from home with a travelling patent medicine aggregation. He travelled thus for a year, taking part in the evening wagon concerts. Then, being a clever painter, he went into the sign painting business with several other young men. For four years

they travelled over the State, painting advertisements on fences and barns on all roads leading into the towns. Each of the painters was a musician, and they gave concerts in the evenings. One whistled beautifully, another sang, another played a banjo, and Riley scuffled with a violin and guitar and spoke verses written by himself.

The boy Riley with his school-master, Lee O. Harris.

During his sign-painting career he sometimes posed as "the celebrated blind sign-painter." Pretending to be stone blind, he bewildered the crowds which collected to watch him work. Mr. Riley was continually playing practical jokes. Perhaps the most ludicrous was one he played on the Methodist Church congregation of his native town. The story as told the writer by a relative of the poet is this: The church needed repairing badly, and a committee went about soliciting aid. Mr. Riley, who was handy at any kind of work, could not help in a financial way, but volunteered to repair the church clock. The committee consented. Just before the reopening of the

church he brought the clock back and carefully hung it in its accustomed place high on the wall over the pulpit. At eleven o'clock, when the minister was warming to his subject, the old clock began striking. It struck fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, and kept on striking. The minister stopped. The clock did not. It was far out of reach and no ladder was handy. The congregation had to be dismissed.



A sign painted by Mr. Riley.

Mr. Riley's first published poems were written for the local paper, the "Hancock Democrat." He stopped painting to go to work on the Anderson (Ind.) "Democrat," for which paper he wrote all the rhymes the editor would let him, and did general reporting. He made up poetic advertisements and enjoyed telling the news in rhyme. His wages were poor, and he longed for a wider field and better pay. He sent many poems to the magazines, but all were rejected. His friends told him that his verses were silly, and it was to vindicate his contention that

they were mistaken that he perpetrated a Poe-poem fraud which he has always deeply regretted. He studied the style of Edgar Allan Poe, and wrote an imitation poem which he entitled, "Leonainie," and had it published in the Kokomo (Ind.) "Gazette." It was made to appear that it was an unpublished poem by Poe, found in an old book. It created a sensation, and many wise literary people declared it to be genuine. It soon became known that Mr. Riley had forged it; he was involved in no end of trouble, he lost his position on the "Democrat," but he had proved that he could write good poetry. Soon afterward he wrote a Christmas story for the Indianapolis "Journal," which pleased the editor, and he was invited to become a member of the paper's staff.

The Riley Homestead, showing attic "where the boys slept."

He remained on the "Journal" for years and for it wrote his first Hoosier dialect poems. They were signed "Benj. F. Johnson, of Boone." After a

sufficient number had been written they were collected and published in a volume entitled "The Ol' Swimmin' Hole an' 'Leven More Poems," which Mr. Riley published at his own expense. It sold well, and ever since he has been deriving a large and steadily increasing income from the products of his most prolific pen. For several years Mr. Riley read in public from his works and was one of the most successful author-readers in the country, but he never liked it and had a strong aversion to travel, so, early in 1896, he retired from the platform. He lives in Indianapolis.

Following is a list of Mr. Riley's books and the popular poems they contain:

"Neighborly Poems:" with thirty-six poems in Hoosier dialect, including The Old Swimmin' Hole, When the Frost Is on the Punkin, and Thoughts fer the Discuraged Farmer.

"Sketches in Prose:" Twelve stories, each prefaced by a poem, including The Elf-Child and Old-Fashioned Roses.

"Afterwhiles:" Sixty-two poems and sonnets, serious, pathetic, humorous and

dialect, including A Life Lesson, Old Aunt Mary's, The Lost Kiss, The Beautiful City, The South Wind and the Sun, When Bessie Died, Knee Deep in June, A Liz-Town Humorist, Griggsby Station, Nothin' to Say, etc.

"Pipes o' Pan:" Five sketches and fifty poems, including An Old Sweetheart. This poem is also published separately in large table-book size, profusely illustrated.

"Rhymes of Childhood:" One hundred and two dialect and serious poems.

"Old-Fashioned Roses:" Sixty-one selected poems, published in England.

"The Flying Islands of the Night:" A weird and grotesque drama in verse.

"Green Fields and Running Brooks:" One hundred and two poems and sonnets, dialect, humorous, and serious, containing A Dream of Autumn, On the Banks o' Deer Crick, A Country Pathway, Dot Leedle Boy, etc.

"Armazindy:" Containing some of Mr. Riley's best dialect and serious work, including Armazindy and the famous Poe Poem.

"Poems Here at Home:" Containing The Absence of Little Wesley, Down to the

Capital, The Old Band, The Raggedy Man, Little Cousin Jasper, Bereaved, and the well-known The Old Man and Jim, etc.

"A Child World" is the last of Mr. Riley's books.

All of the above books, with the exception of "Poems Here at Home," published by the Century Company, New York, and "Old-Fashioned Roses," by Longmans, Green, & Company, London, are published by The Bowen-Merrill Company, Indianapolis and Kansas City, U. S. A.

My dear Art Young:- Your pictures rather than your assertion convince me that you have visited Tennessee.

Yours,
Opie Read.

OPIE POPE READ

WHEN Opie Pope Read was asked, twelve years ago, to write his autobiography, he gave the following characteristic account of his life up to that time:

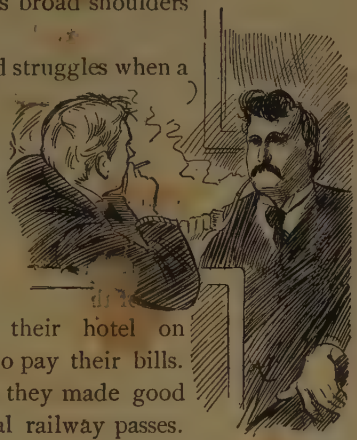
"There are very few facts in connection with my life. I have been but a loitering gleaner in the harvest-field of fact. I was born in Nashville, Tenn. I am thirty-three years of age, and am reasonably honest and presumably religious. I began my downward course on the 'Patriot,' a small paper that hobbled on three legs in Franklin, Ky. The proprietors were much pleased with my work, for I pulled a hand-press with a strong arm, but they always seemed to pay me reluctantly. In 1877 I edited the Bowling Green (Ky.) 'Pantograph,' and I have no cause to believe that anyone shed a tear when—by request—I resigned my position. In 1878 I took the position of city editor of the Little Rock (Ark.) 'Gazette,' and

continued to write watered truth for that paper until 1881, when I accepted a position on the Cleveland (O.) 'Leader.' I did not remain long on the 'Leader.' I had been engaged to do literary work, but Mr. Cowles, the editor, soon gave me instructions that fell heavily upon my ears. He wanted me to compile statistics—wanted a tabulated statement of the lives that had been lost on Lake Erie from the time of Perry's victory down to the dog-days of 1879. I undertook this work, but somehow it did not please him. He said that I had thrown unwarranted life into my figures, and that my deductions were endowed with unwarranted spirit. I seized a broom, swept my labor out of the Western Reserve, and returned to Arkansas. In June, 1882, Mr. P. D. Benham and I began the publication of the 'Arkansaw Traveller,' a paper which goes all over the country, and which at one time, we thought, would go to the deuce."

Mr. Read moved the "Arkansaw Traveller" from Little Rock to Chicago in 1887. He has lived in Chicago ever since, writing profusely for literary syndicates and produc-

ing several novels. He often reads selections from his writings in public. He has the reputation of being the best story-teller in the Chicago Press Club, and spends much of his time at the club-house keeping up that reputation. He has no regard for facts, but has a natural dramatic gift. He is about six feet and four inches tall, has broad shoulders and a leonine front.

Opie Read had many hard struggles when a young man, which he does not mention in his autobiography. At one time he and a partner published the "Prairie Flower," at Carlyle, Kan. It did not pay. The partners were finally requested to leave their hotel on account of their inability to pay their bills. Having no place to sleep, they made good use of their annual editorial railway passes. Boarding a train that went through Carlyle in the evening, they curled up on the seats of a warm car and slept, transferring to a train that would bring them back to their town early the next morning. Thus one cold



Opie Read telling stories in the Chicago Press Club.

winter is said to have worn away. After an unsuccessful early newspaper venture in Nashville, Tenn., Mr. Read began a long tramp overland, covering, it is estimated, nearly four hundred miles. The hardships he endured during that forced tramp furnished him with a fund of ideas for his later literary work.

Among his more important books are: "A Kentucky Colonel," "Emmett Bonlore," "A Tennessee Judge," "On the Suwanee River," and "The Jucklins."

The story "A Backwoods Sunday" is reprinted in "Authors' Readings," from an early book of short stories, with permission from the author.

Love is the center and circumference of
the heaven and aim of all things. It is the key
to joy and sorrow: and the redemption
for all the ills that have been or may be.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

"THE POET OF PASSION"

Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox was born in Johnstown Centre, Wis. Her parents were emigrants from Vermont to Wisconsin in the early days of that State. Her father, who was a descendant from Ethan Allen, was in his younger days a teacher of the violin. In Wisconsin he became a farmer, and it was upon a farm that the first years of Mrs. Wilcox were spent. Soon after she was born the family moved to a farm in the town of Westport, Wis., a few miles from Madison, in the famous "four-lakes district." It was amid the rural scenes of this most beautiful country that she caught the first inspiration of poetry.

Her early education was somewhat limited. She attended the public school in the village of Windsor. Having a decided tendency toward story-writing and rhyming she was always called upon to furnish the fiction and verse for the school magazine. She seems

to have written verses from the time she first learned to spell. She was but a little more than eight years of age when she wrote, or, rather, printed, a most ingenious novel, the original manuscript of which she still has in her possession. The early tendency of the poet to write of love and passion is shown by it, for innumerable love-affairs, always culminating in weddings, are scattered throughout the little volume. The hero becomes a Justice of the Peace, which the youthful country author looked upon as the highest earthly position of honor. The title page reads:

"Minnie Tighthand and Mrs. Dunley, an Eloquent Novel Written by Miss Ella Wheeler."

There is a preface reading as follows:

"The following novel is a true story. I suppose the reader will doubt it, but it is true. It is a

Ella Wheeler Wilcox's Bungalow at Short Beach, Conn.

scene that I witnessed when living in England, and after I came to America I published it. The reader may believe it now."

At that time the girl had never been twenty-five miles away from home, and Mrs. Wilcox wonders now how she ever conceived such a deception. Nearly every chapter of the novel is begun with an original verse. The following is a sample:

"A head covered with pretty curls,
Face white as the snow.
Her teeth look like handsome pearls,
She's tall and merry to!"

Mrs. Wilcox was then, as she has always been since, an indefatigable worker, often producing several short poems in one day. She had a great desire to see some of her productions in print, and set about, without her parents' knowledge, to have them published. Finally, at the age of fourteen, one of her articles was published in the New York "Mercury." The delighted girl sent for a large number of the issue containing it, and the arrival of the bundle was the first intimation her parents had that their child

had "gone into print." When she was sixteen years old "The Chimney Corner" printed one of her productions and paid her for it. It was the first money she had ever earned. Soon after she became a paid contributor to "Harper's Bazar," "Harper's Weekly," "The Saturday Evening Post," of Philadelphia, Leslie's periodicals and many other publications.

The refusal of her works by editors never discouraged her. As soon as a poem or article was returned by one she sent it to another. She had an elaborate system of bookkeeping, keeping scores of productions in the mails all the time. She was particularly anxious to have an article published in the "Atlantic Monthly," and placed that magazine at the top of her list. Finally, after five years of disappointment, she had a poem accepted, and waited three years before seeing it published. Then she got five dollars for it. But it was not many years till she found a ready market for all she produced. Besides her collections of poems she has published several novels and has written much for the newspaper syndicates. Her first

volume, "Drops of Water," was published in 1872, and is a collection of verses on the subject of total abstinence.

"Solitude," which is, perhaps, her most famous poem, was inspired one day when the poet, then a young lady, was on her way from her Westport home to Madison, to attend a public reception at the Wisconsin Gubernatorial mansion. On the train she met a friend, a woman in widow's weeds, who had recently been bereaved. She was deeply touched by the look of sorrow in her face, and, while preparing for the reception that evening, the first two lines of the poem,

> "Laugh, and the world laughs with you,
> Weep, and you weep alone,"

flashed into her mind. Two more lines,

> "For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth
> But has trouble enough of its own,"

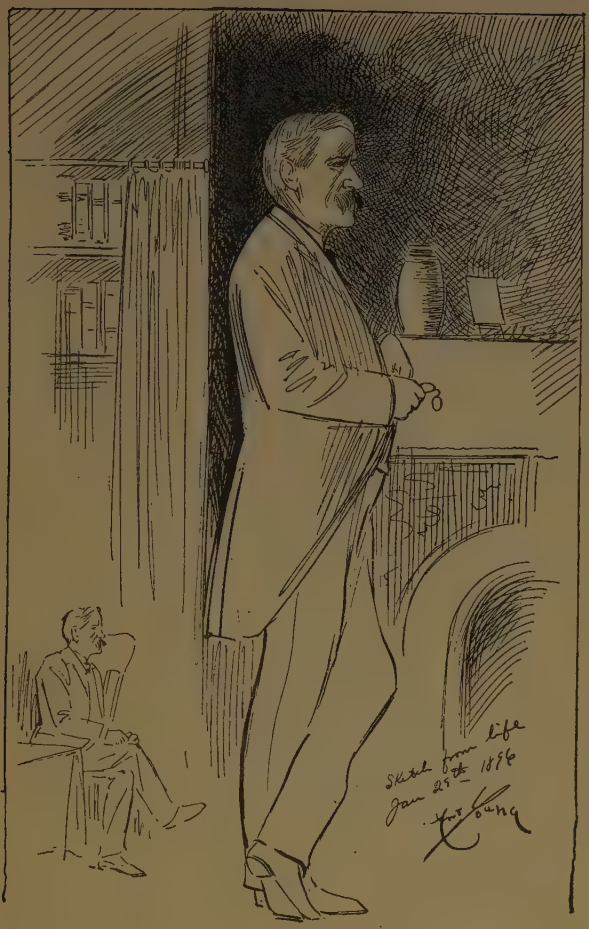
sung themselves into her brain while driving to the Governor's residence. She completed the poem the following morning.

In 1884 Miss Wheeler was married to Mr. Robert M. Wilcox, and her home since then

has been in the East. She lives in New York City in the winter, and in her summer home at Short Beach, Conn., during the hot months. She has given her seaside cottage a poetic name—"The Bungalow." The poet of passion has many fads, chief among them being her gowns, which she designs herself. She has an elaborate and costly collection of girdles, and is always on the lookout for unique and handsome ones to add to it. Her fad in animals is fine Persian cats, which she trains to perform.

Among Ella Wheeler Wilcox's better known books are "Maurine, and Other Poems," which was first published in 1875, "Poems of Passion," "Poems of Pleasure," "Mal Moulee," a novel, "Men, Women, and Emotions" and "Custer and Other Poems." The three poems, "Solitude" and "The Beautiful Land of Nod," from "Poems of Passion," and "Which Are You?" from "Custer and Other Poems," all copyrighted, are reproduced in "Authors' Readings" by permission from both the author and the publishers, W. B. Conkey Company, Chicago.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox's trained cat.



A few years — a little laughter — something that lives
behind us for a day — and we have lived and
died.

very Truly.
C. B. Lewis (M. Quad)

CHARLES B. LEWIS

M. QUAD, whose real name is Charles B. Lewis, was born on the fifteenth day of February, 1844, in the little town of Liverpool, O. Where he was born and where he spent his childhood are of minor consequence, however, since his career did not begin until he was blown up twenty-eight years ago on a racing Ohio River steamboat. He is, perhaps, the solitary example of a man being lifted into fame by a boiler explosion.

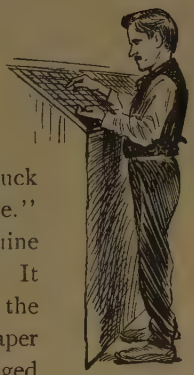
The accident happened in the spring of 1869. Mr. Lewis, who had served through the Civil War, and fought Indians for two years with General Custer, had received a letter from the editor of the Mayville (Ky.) "Bulletin," asking him to come and work on his paper. Like several other American humorists, Mr. Lewis had learned the printer's trade at an early age. He started from Lansing, Mich., where he was engaged as a compositor, press-hand, local reporter and

general man about a small newspaper office. He went by way of Detroit and took the steamer from Cincinnati. A strange thing happened which the humorist has never been able to account for. His mind became a total blank from the time he left Detroit. It transpired later that while he was in Cincinnati he wrote and posted a letter to his wife, but he did not know that he had done so. He has not the slightest remembrance of having boarded the steamer. Neither does he remember anything about the explosion, but there certainly was one—a terrific one, too—and Mr. Lewis, when picked up from the shore, terribly scalded and bruised, was thought to be dead. He was taken to a hospital and there, sixteen days from the time he left Detroit, he regained consciousness.

He went back to Michigan and resumed his work of setting type on the Pontiac "Jacksonian." One day the office ran short of "miscellaneous" matter, and Mr. Lewis, without copy, set up from his case the story of his Ohio River experience, describing his sensations while "progressing sideways through the air," as he put it.

The article was headed "How It Feels to Be Blown Up," and was signed M. Quad. When asked recently why he selected that nom de plume Mr. Lewis said:

"Oh, it was the first thing that popped into my brain. It was natural for me, being a compositor, to use such a name. An em quad, you know, is the metal space a printer puts between the period and the first letter of the following word. I might just as well have signed myself Italics, Roman, Small Caps, or any other printer's term, but M. Quad struck me first and has stuck by me ever since."



Mr. Lewis setting up his first humorous article.

That article was so filled with genuine humor that it was copied far and wide. It attracted the attention of the editor of the Detroit "Free Press," at that time a paper of none but local fame, who soon engaged the compositor as a reporter. His connection with the "Free Press" lasted twenty-two years, and during that time he wrote the greater part of the many humorous and pathetic stories which gave that paper a great circulation in this and other countries. He went to New York in 1891 to

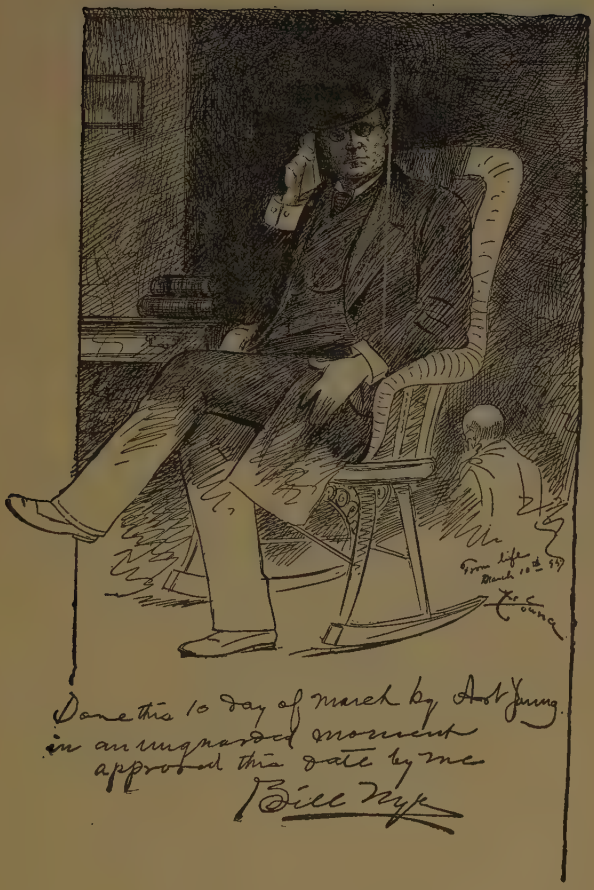
enter a broader field for observation and literary labor. He has worked almost continuously ever since for the literary syndicates, producing an astounding amount of matter. He lives in Brooklyn.

M. Quad's greatest horror has always been that readers would tire of his types. That accounts for the succession of unique and totally dissimilar characters which he has created. When he had the "Lime Kiln Club" at the height of its popularity he dropped it to delve in a fresh field. "His Honor," "Bijah," "Brother Gardner," "Trustee Pullback," "Mr. and Mrs. Bowser," "Carl Dunder," and many more of his creations are as real to millions of readers as any characters in history. With the possible exception of the "Arizona Kicker," there is not a trace of ill-nature in all of his writings. Governor Irwin, of Arizona, once said that half the readers of the so-called "extracts from the 'Kicker'" believe them to be real, and that they have injured the country more than the wild Indians have.

M. Quad among the sailors.

M. Quad is as eccentric as he is humorous.

His personal appearance, his manner, even the tones of his voice, are peculiar. He is a man of fads and hobbies, having tried and tired of innumerable things seemingly ridiculous for a plodding journalist. During recent years his chief delight has been to do a sort of literary missionary work among sailors. Nearly every pleasant day, once a week at least, he may be seen about the wharves of New York Harbor, carrying on his arm a basket filled with books of fiction, which he distributes free among the sailors. He has made a careful study of the subject and says that of all stories the sailors enjoy most the sea-tales of W. Clark Russell. Mr. Lewis spends much of his time studying human nature in the slums of the great East Side of New York City, and makes frequent trips to Thompson Street to get inspiration for his negro stories. He likes to talk with the colored people about hoodoos. Another of his delights is to get on a street-car and ride until he gets tired, without paying the slightest attention to where the car is taking him. M. Quad's four published books are: "Quad's Odds," "Sawed-Off Sketches," "The Lime Kiln Club," and "Field, Fort, and Fleet."


From life
March 10th 99
Done this 10 day of march by Art Young.
in an unpraised moment
approved this date by me
Bill Nye

"THE WIT OF LARAMIE"

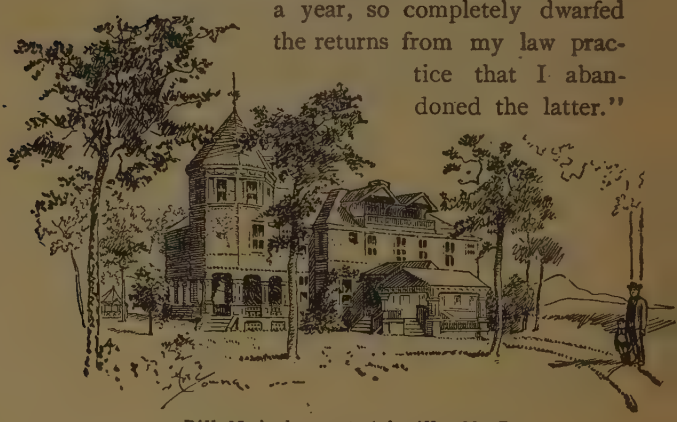
THE little town of Shirley, Me., was the birthplace of Edgar William Nye. He was born on the twenty-fifth day of August, 1850, but did not live long in Maine. "When only two years of age," he wrote in his autobiography, "I girded up my loins, and without other luggage, travelled westerly, taking with me my parents, who pleaded so hard to go that I could not well refuse them."

The family went to Northern Wisconsin, where, on a farm on the banks of the St. Croix River, Mr. Nye grew to manhood. Speaking of his childhood, he said: "There is nothing in particular, perhaps, to distinguish my youth from that of other eminent men. I did not study Greek grammar by the light of a pine-knot when I was a child. I did not think about it."

Mr. Nye received an academic education at River Falls, Wis., and studied law in that

city. He did not, however, apply for admission to the bar. He went to Wyoming Territory in 1876, where he was admitted to the bar and practiced law for several years in Laramie City, but, according to his account he managed to keep the matter very quiet, so that only a few people ever knew much about it. He was elected to the office of Justice of the Peace. Having much time at his disposal and possessing a "considerable assortment of long words, which he had thought out at leisure moments," he began writing Sunday letters for the Cheyenne "Sun" at a dollar a column. Thus began his career as a humorous writer.

"My revenue from those letters," he said, "which aggregated as much as sixty dollars a year, so completely dwarfed the returns from my law practice that I abandoned the latter."



Bill Nye's home at Asheville, N. C.

He soon accepted a position on the Laramie City "Sentinel." Of the editor of that paper he wrote later: "He was warm-hearted and generous to a fault. He was more generous to a fault than to anything else—more especially his own faults. He gave me twelve dollars a week to edit the paper — local, telegraph, selections, religious, sporting, political, fashions, and obituary. He said twelve dollars was too much, but if I would jerk the press occasionally and take care of his children he would try to stand it."

Mr. Nye left the "Sentinel" to found a paper which he named the "Boomerang," after his favorite mule, which he called Boomerang, because he never knew where it would strike. The office was over a livery stable in which the mule was kept, and on the door Nye put this sign: "Persons wishing to see the editor will please twist the tail of the white mule and take the elevator." From that time Bill Nye's fame dates. The "Boomerang" was quoted all over the country and abroad, but it was not a financial success. Mr. Nye was one of the prominent citizens

of Laramie City, and after serving his term as Justice of the Peace, held the offices of United States Commissioner, Superintendent of Public Schools, and Member of the City Council.

He was subsequently Postmaster, also, and his humorous letter of acceptance, written to the President, was given out for publication in Washington, and was laughed over throughout the country. He gave it as his opinion that his selection for the office was a triumph of eternal right over error and wrong. Continuing, he said: "It is one of the epochs, I may say, in the nation's onward march toward political purity and perfection. I don't know when I have noticed any stride in affairs of State which has so thoroughly impressed me with its wisdom." He resigned before his term of office expired and his letter of resignation to the President was equally humorous and was likewise given out for publication. He told the President that he had left the key to the office in the wood-shed, and that the read postal cards had been carefully pigeon-holed separately from the unread ones. Bill Nye in those

How Bill Nye once looked.

days wore a full beard and did not much resemble Bill Nye as the public remembers him. He was six feet tall, and during most of his life was very slender, but in the last few years before his death he became quite portly.

After abandoning the "Boomerang" he removed to Hudson, Wis., where he lived for a number of years and broadened his field by contributing to the Chicago "Daily News," "Puck" and other papers, and collecting and publishing in book form the better articles he had written for the "Boomerang." His first book was "Forty Lies and Other Liars." Like Eugene Field and James Whitcomb Riley, he had a knack for sketching, and sometimes illustrated, in a crude way, his own works.

The popularity of Mr. Nye's writings grew rapidly and his services were accordingly much sought after. The New York "World" secured them in 1886, and he wrote a weekly article for that paper until a few months before his death. This article was syndicated also and published in several hundreds of newspapers throughout the

United States. The returns from the sales of these articles, from his books, and from his annual lecture tours made him a wealthy man. In his lectures the effect of his odd and original remarks was much heightened by his droll manner. He had no subject. When asked by lecture committees what he was going to talk about he telegraphed back that "he would talk about an hour." One night in Chicago as he stepped out to the foot-lights, he said: "I have been prevailed upon to change the program to-night. I have given the same program in Chicago so many times that people have grown tired of it, so this evening we have decided upon a complete change. If you will look at your programs you will notice that they are pink. Last year they were blue."

A pen drawing of Mr. Nye and his son by himself.

Mr. Nye had three homes, the old one at Hudson, Wis.; one on Staten Island, N. Y.; and another, a grand one, near Asheville, N. C. In the last he died on the twenty-second day of February, 1896. He left a wife and four children.

A genial, gentle-mannered man was Bill Nye. Only once has the writer heard of his

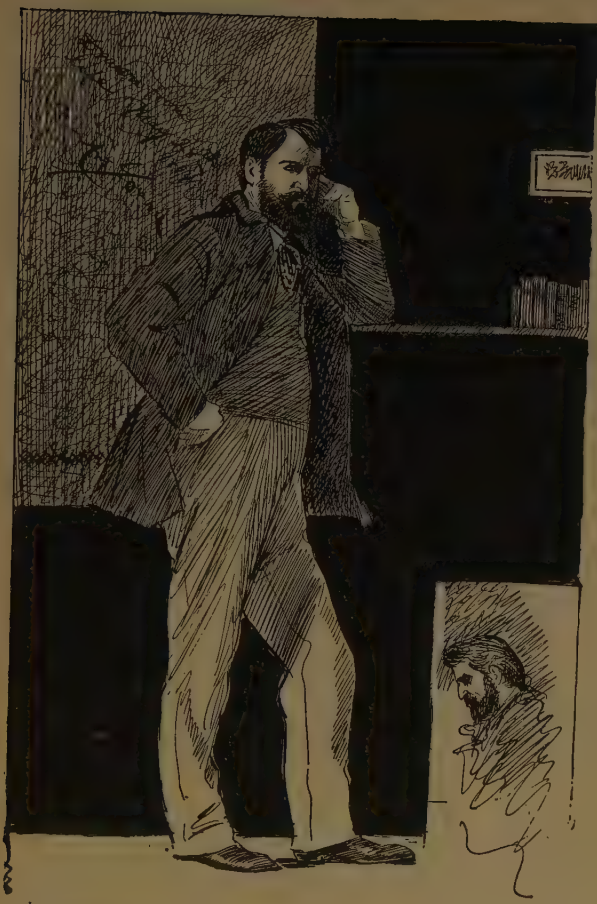
temper being ruffled. He was lecturing with James Whitcomb Riley in the South. They were both tired and not at all in a pleasant humor when they entered the leading hotel in a small town. An officious clerk did not notice them as they came in, did not see that their baggage was taken or invite them to register. He was too busy talking politics. He had reached the climax of an oratorical outburst when Bill Nye, who had stood it as long as he could, said, in his droll way: "Say, do you know that you remind me of Clay?" "Clay," exclaimed the flattered clerk as he turned around, "the great Henry Clay?" "No," replied the humorist; "clay, just common clay. The kind they make sewer-pipe of."

You remind me of Clay.

Mr. Nye was once caught in a terrific cyclone in which he had a leg broken and was otherwise seriously injured. In writing to a friend about the accident, he said: "I cannot for the life of me tell how it happened, but I think I must have slipped on a peel of thunder. People can't be too careful how they peel their thunder and leave it lying around on the sidewalk."

The accompanying full-page drawing of Mr. Nye is from a sketch made from life in Chicago. The inscription "Made by Art Young in an unguarded moment and approved this date by me," is characteristic of the man. The selections, "How to Hunt the Fox" and "A Blasted Snore," are taken, with permission from both author and publisher, from "Wit and Humor," by Bill Nye and James Whitcomb Riley. The book is copyrighted and published by F. Tennyson Neely, New York City.

Mr. Nye's other published works are: "A Comic History of the United States," "A Comic History of England," and "A Guest at the Ludlow."



Contemplating murder – to murder of a romantic sort it may be.

Yours with due respect

May 28/94 Hamlin Garland

THE "VERITIST"

HAMLIN GARLAND, like his works, is of the Western farm. He is one of the farmers, and is proud of it. He was born in September, 1860, on a farm near the little village of West Salem, Wis. It was in a picturesque valley, or coulé, which Mr. Garland speaks of now as the "home" coulé. His boyhood experience was the hard one of the ordinary poor farmer's son. When he was ten years of age the family moved to Osage, Iowa, on to a farm with which the author's most vivid recollections are associated. Eleven years later his father went to Dakota, leaving him alone on the Iowa farm to work it. He did all of the work alone that season. Help was scarce. Even at that annual farm crisis, "harvest time," no man could be found to help him. The grain was unusually heavy, and a great amount of it had

In the home coulé.

been grown. Young Garland harvested every stalk of it, cutting all day long, binding and stacking it by moon and star light. The hardships of the farmer were thoroughly impressed upon him.

During the years he lived on the Iowa farm, he had managed to complete a course of study in the Cedar Valley Seminary, and his brain had been fired with a longing for greater knowledge and travel. The father was willing, and gave him thirty dollars for his season's labor. It was all Hamlin asked for. With that amount of money he started out into the world. He went to Chicago, but the size of the city frightened him, and he made his way gradually to Boston. In Boston he made a poor living as a tutor of private classes, and he added to his fund of information by reading in the Public Library. A little later he worked his way back to the West, taught school in Illinois a few months, and then went to Dakota to plunge into the midst of the memorable land boom of 1883. He established himself on a "claim," which he subsequently sold for two hundred dollars, and

started back to Boston to pursue his teaching and reading.

At that time he had no idea of becoming a writer of stories, and as to becoming a novelist, that was not even one of his ambitions. But in 1884 he wrote a homely sketch about corn-husking, describing it just as he had seen it and done it hundreds of times on the farm. He sent it to the "Literary World," a New York publication. It was published, and the editor wrote an encouraging letter asking for more farm sketches written in the same style. He even promised to pay for them. That promise is all Mr. Garland ever got for the articles, but they opened the way to fame. He wrote a series of sketches to follow that on corn-husking, on various topics, harvesting, threshing, etc. Soon he branched out by sending a long poem to "Harper's Weekly." It was published, and the author was paid twenty dollars for it. It was then, Mr. Garland says, that he first realized that his literary efforts really had a commercial value.

Mr. Garland's Wisconsin home.

He immediately set to work earnestly, and between 1884 and 1887 produced a prodigious amount of sketches and short stories. They were in demand and he prospered.

In 1887 he returned to the old farm in Iowa for a visit, and while there he first conceived the idea of writing a novel. As he watched the doings of the farm-folk about him, as he learned of the ups and downs of his former neighbors, of the wanderings of his boyhood playmates, he realized that there is true romance in the lives of the plain Western farmers. He felt that he could write of them just as they were. No author ever had more faith in himself than Hamlin Garland. He had found the field in which he believed that he was born to work. It was a field of great richness, and one as yet almost wholly untilled. He returned to Boston and wrote his first novel. Others followed, and since then he has been kept busy producing its successors and writing for magazines.

Mr. Garland at work in his vineyard.

Mr. Garland has lived wherever he could work most advantageously, sometimes in New York, sometimes in Boston, sometimes in Chicago, and sometimes among the Rocky Mountains, but there is but one place he calls home. That is West Salem, Wis., in sight of the little farm in the "home" coulé. There he has built a plain house on a few acres of land, and has established his aged parents in it. He spends a large part of each summer with them, taking great pride in his garden, working out of doors each afternoon. He is especially fond of his vineyard, and takes first prize for grapes at the County fair nearly every year.

His published works are: "Main Travelled Roads," with an introduction by W. D. Howells, "A Member of the Third House," "A Spoil of Office," "Prairie Folks," "Rose of Deutscher's Coolly," "Prairie Songs," a book of poetry, and a book of essays on art called "Crumbling Idols."

The story, "Uncle Ethan Ripley," is selected by permission from "Prairie Folks," published in 1892 by F. J. Schulte, Chicago, and later by Stone & Kimball, New York.

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